

PH 0360172x

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED MAR 24 1976

DATE ENTERED JUL 6 1976

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Vulcan

AND/OR COMMON

Vulcan

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Highway 31, South, Vulcan Park

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Birmingham

VICINITY OF

6

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Alabama

01

Jefferson

073

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

City of Birmingham

STREET & NUMBER

700 City Hall

CITY, TOWN

Birmingham

VICINITY OF

STATE

Alabama

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Probate Court-Jefferson County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

716-21st Street, North

CITY, TOWN

Birmingham

STATE

Alabama

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Vulcan is a cast iron statue located in a four and one-half acre park on Red Mountain in Birmingham. The 120,000 pound god of fire and forges is fifty-six feet tall and mounted on a 124 foot tower. Attired in classical dress, holds an uplifted torch in one hand while the other rests on the anvil. The iron which was used in the statue is from Birmingham mines and smelters and varies in thickness from three-fourths to two inches in thickness.

Substantial restoration and preservation were undertaken on the statue and in the park area between 1967 and 1971. Concrete reinforcing rods were extended well into the pedestal and legs and body of the statue. The body was filled to the chest with concrete for additional support. The first red sandstone base constructed in 1939 was sheathed in white marble and Vulcan was recoated with aluminum paint.

Other improvements included a museum section, an air-conditioned observation tower between Vulcan and the top of the pedestal, an elevator to the tower, a separate gift shop-concession building, formal gardens, fountains and landscaped picnic areas.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1904 and 1971

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Guiseppi Moretti

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The statue of Vulcan, created in 1904 by Italian artist Guiseppi Moretti, is Birmingham's most noted landmark. At the time of its dedication in June of that year as Alabama's exhibit at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, it was the largest cast iron statue made by man, and presumably, still is.

Under the auspices of Birmingham's Commercial Club, Moretti, a New York based artist was chosen for the task in 1903. He was well known at this time for his work for the Vanderbilt family as well as his statues in Schenely Park in Philadelphia, those at Gettysburg Battlefield, and one at the Kentucky state capitol. The statue was cast from iron mined and smelted in the Birmingham area to represent the city's industry and was shipped to the World's Fair in sections over several months. Despite a glorious dedication on June 7, 1904, noting that its size surpassed that of a 1,000 year old Buddha in Japan, the huge iron man failed to retain its initial prestige and was dumped on the side of Red Mountain after the fair while citizens debated on a site for the statue. In 1906 Vulcan was reassembled in the midst of the Alabama State Fairgrounds south of Birmingham and remained there for thirty years.

Community interest and agitation began in 1935 to move Vulcan to a more impressive and dignified location such as Red Mountain. With the assistance of the Works Project Administration the statue was removed from the Fairgrounds in 1936, but was not reassembled until 1939. A park site was donated on Red Mountain by United States Steel to enhance Vulcan's location there. The entire project was completed at a cost of \$44,062, \$38,874 of which was WPA financed.

Between 1967 and 1971 the statue underwent substantial restoration and reinforcement and the park facilities were expanded through a publicly voted bond issue. These improvements have made one of Birmingham's most famous landmarks easily accessible to visitors.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Vulcan in Birmingham by Raymond Rowell, Sr., Centennial edition, 1972.
The Story of Vulcan and Birmingham. Southern University press, 1962.
Birmingham News, July 25, 1971 and October 24, 1971.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 4 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 6	5 1 9 0 0 0	3 7 0 5 6 2 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

W. Warner Floyd, Executive Director and Donna C. Hole

ORGANIZATION

Alabama Historical Commission

DATE

March 17, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

725 Monroe Street

TELEPHONE

(205) 832-6621

CITY OR TOWN

Montgomery

STATE

Alabama 36130

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Phil B. Howard Jr.

TITLE SAPO Ala

DATE March 18, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Acting

Wm. H. Harts

DATE 7/6/76

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTENDING

Charles H. ...

DATE 7-1-76

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER