

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



1053

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 Cuban Friendship Urn  
other names \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number Reservation 332, Ohio Drive at 14<sup>th</sup> St. Bridge, S.W.  not for publication  
city or town Washington  vicinity  
state D.C. code DC county n/a code 001 zip 20242

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 Acting F.P.O. 8/28/07  
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, ACTING SHPO 2-27-2007  
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): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Patricia Andrews 10/11/2007  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cuban Friendship Urn  
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.  
County and State

**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	
		buildings
		sites
		structures
1		objects
1	0	Total

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

Memorials in Washington, D.C.

**number of contributing resource previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function of Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION and CULTURE: work of art

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION and CULTURE: work of art

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Academic Abstraction

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation \_\_\_\_\_  
walls \_\_\_\_\_  
roof \_\_\_\_\_  
other Marble \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Cuban Friendship Urn

Name of Property

Washington, DC

County and State

Section 7 Page 2

### DESCRIPTION

The *Cuban Friendship Urn* is located in West Potomac Park along Ohio Drive in between the Rochambeau Memorial Bridge and the Arlan D. Williams, Jr. Memorial Bridge (commonly referred to as the Fourteenth Street Bridge) which cross the Potomac River nearby. This white marble urn, completed in 1928, is representative of the Academic Abstraction style of sculpture prominent during the early twentieth century.

The relief on the *Cuban Friendship Urn* is derived from the *Maine Monument* (Felix Cabarrocas, 1924-25, rebuilt 1927) located in Havana, Cuba. The urn was carved from a fragment of the original monument which was destroyed during a hurricane in 1926.

The rectangular marble base incorporates a stylized buttress on each of the four sides; it is a scaled version of the *Maine Monument* terminuses. A Greek key molding runs around the top of the pedestal. A small marble block sits on top of the base. It provides a surface for a bronze plaque with raised letters that notes (in Spanish) the urn was carved from the monument to honor the U.S.S. *Maine* and erected by the citizens of Havana that had stood in their city until it was toppled 20 October 1926. The concave base of the urn features a band of alternating oak leaves with acorns and laurel leaves with berries, Greek and Roman symbols of honor, respectively. The front of the cylindrical portion of the urn features two stylized Ionic capitals supporting a small lintel with a bronze descriptive plaque with a raised inscription (in Spanish) that notes the urn was a gift of amnesty between the citizens of Cuba and the U.S. and presented by Gerardo Machado. The plaque is surmounted by a stylized eagle with spread wings; the eagle has been used in funerary art since at least Roman times. The composition of these elements also derived from Cabarrocas' *Maine Monument*.

Extending around both sides of the urn are stylized female representational figures, one of which holds a key, a symbol of fidelity. The two figures hold hands, marking the center of the rear of the urn. Below their hands is a square panel with an image of Havana's harbor, depicting the sinking U.S.S. *Maine*. The front and rear centerlines are terminated along the convex rim by different crests. The urn weights seven tons.<sup>1</sup>

Concrete has been used to repair the urn, especially at the rear.

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, *1929 Annual Report of the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks*, p. 64.

**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)

Art

**Period of Significance**

1928

**Significant Dates**

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

**Cultural Affiliation**

n/a

**Architect/Builder**

unknown

**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 Headquarters



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Cuban Friendship Urn

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State

Section 8 Page 2

### SIGNIFICANCE

The *Cuban Friendship Urn* is significant as the second gift of sculpture presented to the nation's capital by a foreign country. The urn was a gift from citizens of Cuba to the people of the United States and symbolizes the good relationship that once existed between the nations. It was presented to President Calvin Coolidge in Havana, while he attended the Sixth Pan American Congress in January 1928. Congress authorized its acceptance on 22 May 1928. The relief on the urn derived from engineer Felix Cabarrocas' *Maine Monument* (1924-25, rebuilt 1927) located in Havana, but the urn's sculptor is unknown. The urn is significant under Criterion C in the area of Art.

On 24 February 1895 following efforts begun in 1868, Cubans resumed their fight for independence from Spain.<sup>2</sup> Because the Cubans were not concerned with U.S. capital investments (mostly associated with sugar), the U.S. government sent the U.S.S. *Maine*, a 6,682-ton second class battleship built between 1888 and 1895, to Havana in January 1898 to watch the situation and defend American interests.<sup>3</sup> During the evening of 15 February 1898, its forward gunpowder magazines exploded and the ship sank; nearly three-quarters of the crew (267 soldiers) died. Although the cause of the explosion could not be determined, contemporary American popular opinion blamed it on a Spanish mine. The sinking of the *Maine* precipitated the Spanish-Cuban-American War which officially began when President William McKinley's Declaration of War was signed on 25 April 1898. The war ended the following December, when Spain and the United States signed a peace treaty in Paris. The agreement established independence for Cuba and, after more than three centuries, expelled Spain from the New World. However, while Spain's flag was lowered (10 December) the U.S. flag was hoisted.<sup>4</sup>

The wreckage from the U.S.S. *Maine* was raised in 1912 in order to clear Havana's harbor and also facilitate investigation of the cause of the explosion. Once again, a definitive conclusion was not determined. The idea to erect a monument to the victims of the U.S.S. *Maine* emerged during this time. In 1913, the president of the Cuban Republic appointed a committee for the effort.

Felix Cabarrocas, an engineer, won the design competition for the *Maine Monument*. After various delays, work began on the memorial in 1924 at a site located near the former Santa Clara Battery on Avenida Antonio Maceo. Cuban President Alfredo Zayas, General John Pershing, Admiral Dayton, and the Minister of Spain attended the inaugural ceremony on 8 March 1925. The tall and broad monument consisted of a rectilinear pool framed by steps that led to a platform with another series of steps. Flanking knee walls supported two of the U.S.S. *Maine*'s large ten-inch guns which faced outward. At

<sup>2</sup> In Cuban history, this third concerted effort is known as the War of Independence.

<sup>3</sup> During the nineteenth century, Cuba was the world's largest producer of sugar; its other significant industries were cattle and tobacco. The economy was based on enslaved Africans.

<sup>4</sup> It was not until the Platt Amendment, signed on 20 May 1902, that the U.S. granted Cuba its independence. The U.S., nevertheless, reserved the right to intervene under the pretext of preserving independence and stability.

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National Park Service

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Cuban Friendship Urn

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Section 8 Page 3

the center, two bronze representational figures stood in front of two enormous Corinthian columns surmounted by a lintel supporting a large eagle with spread wings. In October 1926, a hurricane toppled the monument; it was rebuilt the following year.

In November 1924, Gerardo Machado, the youngest general during the War of Independence, won the national election for Cuba's fifth president and took office the following May.<sup>5</sup> By the late 1920s, a significant percentage of Cubans from all socio-economic backgrounds were troubled by U.S. interventions in Cuban affairs. The issues were further complicated by the fact that a large part of the land and industry associated with sugar was owned by U.S. citizens. In 1927, Machado began to undertake measures toward a dictatorship.

During this year, President Machado also directed that a piece from the fallen columns of the *Maine Monument* be used for a gift. The *Cuban Friendship Urn* was presented to President Coolidge in Havana, while he attended the Sixth Pan American Congress in January 1928. The two basic positions debated during the international meetings divided along the line between those that sought to preserve the status quo and those that wanted change that would ensure no one government could dominate Pan Americanism and that all American states had identical rights.<sup>6</sup> Without doubt, the *Cuban Friendship Urn* was a generous, meaningful, and handsome gift, even though the action may not have been appreciated by all Cubans. The U.S. Congress authorized its acceptance on 22 May 1928 (Public Resolution 49, 70<sup>th</sup> Congress). The *Cuban Friendship Urn* was installed later that year in the Rose Garden located at the southern end of West Potomac Park (between the Long Bridge and the U.S. Route 1 Highway Bridge).

In November 1928, Machado declared himself the only legal candidate for the presidency in Cuba. By October 1930, Machado's government suspended constitutional guarantees that, in turn, led to insurrections, strikes, deaths, and ultimately to Machado's resignation on 12 August 1933. The following year, the United States and Cuba repealed the Platt Amendment which ended the U.S. occupation of the island nation.

The *Cuban Friendship Urn* was removed from West Potomac Park in 1946 when work was being done in this part of the park to construct the Rochambeau span of the Fourteenth Street Bridge. The urn remained in storage until November 1997, just before Veterans Day, when it was installed along Ohio Drive, at the southern end of West Potomac Park, in preparation for the one-hundredth anniversary of the loss of the *Maine*.

<sup>5</sup> Machado was the candidate from the Liberal Party.

<sup>6</sup> "Pan-America," *Time* Jan. 16, 1928.

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Cuban Friendship Urn

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State

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## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Goode, James. *The Outdoor Sculpture of Washington, D.C.* Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1974.

[www.history.navy.mil](http://www.history.navy.mil)

[www.spanamwar.com/mainemonumenthavana.html](http://www.spanamwar.com/mainemonumenthavana.html)

Cuban Friendship Urn  
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreege of Property** less than one acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	1 8	3 2 3 2 0 7	4 3 0 5 2 6 6	3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2				4			

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, Historian  
organization National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers date May 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 NPS, NCR, National Mall & Memorial Parks  
street & number 900 Ohio Drive, S.W. telephone 202.485.9686  
city or town Washington state D.C. zip code 20242

**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 Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.



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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Cuban Friendship Urn

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State

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## Verbal Boundary Description

In 1997, the *Cuban Friendship Urn* was removed from storage and located in West Potomac Park (Reservation 332) along Ohio Drive in between the Rochambeau Memorial Bridge and Arlan D. Williams, Jr. Memorial Bridge, both of which extend overhead nearby. The boundary of the object includes the land occupied by the granite slab that supports the marble monument.

## Boundary Justification

The present boundary of the *Cuban Friendship Urn* is justifiable as the object remains visible in an appropriate public space.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Cuban Friendship Urn  
NAME:

MULTIPLE Memorials in Washington, D.C.  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, District of Columbia

DATE RECEIVED: 8/31/07 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 9/17/07  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 10/02/07 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 10/14/07  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 07001053

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

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

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 10/11/07 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept c  
REVIEWER Patricia Andrews DISCIPLINE Historian  
TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE 10/11/2007

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.



THE  
MONUMENT  
TO  
THE  
SACRED  
SITES  
OF  
THE  
CITY  
OF  
MADRID  
IN  
THE  
YEAR  
1900

1900

CURAN FRIENDSHIP URN

WASHINGTON, DC

EVIE BARSOUM

FEB 2004

NCR

FACING NORTHEAST

1 OF 1

PENN 18 ST < 008  
377 20\*\*NNH3 10 2(024)

Please refer to the map in the  
Multiple Property Cover Sheet  
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64500992