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MULTIPLE PROPERTY DOCUMENTATION F	ORM NATIONAL PARK S	
This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic conte: National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For a word processor, or computer, to compete all items.		
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A. Name of Multiple Property Listing		
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Garden Club of America Markers in D.C.

Name of Multiple Property Listing

Washington, D.C.

State

Table of Contents for Written Narrative

Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and the title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

	*	Page Numbers
E.	Statement of Historic Contexts (If more than one historic context is documented, present them in sequential order.)	E-1 through E-8
F.	Associated Property Types (Provide description, significance, and registration requirements.)	F-9 through F-10
G.	Geographical Data	G-11
H.	Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods (Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.)	H-12
I.	Major Bibliographical References (List major written works and primary location of additional documentation: State Historic Preservation Office, other State Agencies, Federal agency, local government, University, or other, specifying repository.)	I-13 through I-14

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.*)

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 Garden Club of America Markers in Washington, D.C.

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INTRODUCTION

The Garden Club of America Entrance markers are stone markers that were erected to mark important entrances to the District of Columbia from Maryland and Virginia during the 1930s. Originally planned to be dedicated as part of the 1932 George Washington Bicentennial celebration, the markers were constructed both concurrently with the series of events celebrating the 200th anniversary of Washington's birth and following the celebration. The markers were designed by local Washington, D.C. architect Edward Donn for the Garden Club of America which sponsored their erection in collaboration with the National Capital Parks and Planning Commission and under the review of the Commission of Fine Arts.

MONUMENTAL ENTRYWAYS INTO THE NATION'S CAPITAL AND THE GEORGE WASHINGTON BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF 1932

An Act of Congress, approved December 1924, created The George Washington Bicentennial Commission to study and recommend a "proper" celebration in 1932 of the 200th anniversary of the birth of George Washington. The Commission's purpose was to commemorate "*the first true American*" so that "*future generations of American citizens may live according to the example and precepts of his exalted life and character and thus perpetuate the American Republic*." As part of this Act, each state was encouraged to appoint state commissions and committees to formulate programs for such a celebration in conjunction with the federal Commission. In addition, the Commission invited the public to send recommendations for this celebration. Special events were to be celebrated across the nation, with particular emphasis on places that George Washington frequented. In the nation's capital, a series of major and collateral events were planned for the 1932 celebration, including, among others, the formal opening of the Mount Vernon Memorial Boulevard (Virginia leg of the George Washington Memorial Parkway); completion and opening of the Arlington Memorial Bridge; and construction of the U.S. Supreme Court building. The anniversary events were to take place between February 22 (George Washington's birthday) and November 24 (Thanksgiving Day).

Coincidental to preparations for the George Washington Bicentennial celebration, and as part of the massive public building program then underway, President Herbert Hoover sought special appropriations for "imposing entrances" into "what is destined to be the most lavishly developed capital in the world," as noted in the *Evening Star*.¹ The National Capital Park and Planning Commission (NCPC) began studying ideas for treatment of the various approaches to the city. In particular, in 1929, the NCPC was developing plans for an appropriate approach into the city from Virginia at Key Bridge, a monumental

¹ "Capital Gateway Plans Considered by Commission," The Evening Star, 1929.

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north entrance portal into the city at 16th Street, and lesser portals at various other entry points into the city from Virginia and Maryland.²

In 1930, the Garden Club of America (GCA) proposed to sponsor the marking of entrances into the nation's capital, with the idea that the project be carried out in time for the George Washington Bicentennial in 1932. As initially conceived by the National Capital Committee of the Garden Club of America under the chairmanship of Mrs. Frank B. Noyes, the GCA would develop and carry out a planting scheme at certain identified approaches into the city. In October 1930, the GCA furthered the notion of marking the entry points into the city not only by landscaping elements, but by placing "two shafts or columns surmounted by eagles" at the identified entries.³ As noted in a letter from Mrs. William Lockwood, the President of the Garden Club of America, "It is believed that attractive entrances into Washington will not only add to our pride in our Capital, but may also be an inspiration to other cities to increase the beauty of their entering highways." The NCPC endorsed the notion of using columns to mark the approaches to the city and thus began working with the Garden Club of America on developing a design for entry markers.

Proposed Entry Pylons

In January 1931, the NCPC presented to the Commission of Fine Arts a suggestion for the Garden Club entrances into the city. At this meeting, NCPC suggested re-using 16-foot columns that were being removed from the State, War and Navy building (the old Executive Office Building, now the Eisenhower Executive Office Building) and enhancing them with eagles on top. The Commission of Fine Arts examined the proposed design and unanimously rejected it as "being out of scale and inappropriate as a marker.⁴" Mr. Moore, Chairman of the Fine Arts Commission (CFA) noted that "the Garden Club of America would do much better to develop a planting scheme that could be carried out at the various entrances to the District of Columbia...allowing space for some architectural motif appropriately designed that could be erected there later."⁵

² In 1929, plans for a monumental portal at 16th Street and the District line were approved by NCPC, while Wisconsin Avenue at Western was also being considered. See "District Portal Plans Approved: 16th Street Parkway Approach is O.K.'d by Planning Commission," *The Evening Star*, June 22, 1929; "Proposed Capital North Portal is Before Planners," *The Evening Star*, July 26, 1929; and "Wisconsin Avenue Entrance to City to be Considered," *The Evening Star*, October 19, 1929, p.12. ³ Letter from Mrs. William A. Lockwood, President of the Garden Club of America to Mrs. Frank B. Noyes, Chairman, National Capital Committee, The Garden Club of America, October 10, 1932.

⁴ Minutes from the Commission of Fine Arts, January 6, 1931.

⁵ ibid.

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In a letter addressed to Col. Grant of the National Capital Park and Planning Commission, CFA Chairman Charles Moore noted that the discarded columns from the State, War and Navy building are "in themselves bad in design and not of the right scale to serve the intended purpose."⁶ His letter strongly suggested that in view of the limited budget,⁷ the funds should be expended strictly on planting schemes, which "ultimately would serve surroundings of appropriately designed and executed markers." However, in his letter, Moore also acknowledges that the granite pylons at the Virginia end of the Arlington Memorial Bridge (with eagles atop) could be used, in terms of material and workmanship, as an appropriate model for entrance pylons.

Despite the CFA's effort to encourage planting-only schemes, the NCPC continued to pursue the idea of monumental entry pylons, seizing upon Moore's reference to the Memorial Bridge pylons. In February 1931, NCPC presented drawings to the CFA showing a proposed pylon design, modeled after the Memorial Bridge ones. As drawn, the pylons measured 14 ¹/₂ feet in height, with the eagles on top rising an additional two feet four inches. ⁸ The NCPC proposed eight pairs of pylons— "two at each of the eight important entrances to the District of Columbia." An article on the proposed pylons and an accompanying sketch appeared in the *Evening Star* newspaper (*Figure 1*).⁹ At the February 1931 Commission of Fine Arts meeting, NCPC noted that the Garden Club planned to erect temporary pylons out of concrete to be ready for the George Washington celebration.¹⁰ The Commission approved the pylon design, but urged NCPC and GCA to make the pylons in permanent form, recommending white cement mixed with white marble aggregate. The Commission further suggested that marble tips might be used in place of eagles.¹¹

⁶ Letter from Charles Moore, Chairman, Fine Arts Commission to Colonel Grant, Executive and Disbursing Officer, National Capital Park and Planning Commission, January 7, 1931.

⁷ In January 1931, the Garden Club of America had raised \$4,000 for the project.

⁸ Minutes from the Commission of Fine Arts, February 12, 1931.

⁹ "D.C. Memorial and Entry Pylons Will be Hastened: Garden Club Meeting Discusses new Markers," The Evening Star, n.d. and "Favor 2-Column Portals Design," *The Evening Star*, December 19, 1930. The latter article notes that the Commission was considering markers at the following five locations: Bladensburg Road, Georgia Avenue, Piney Branch Road, the Highway Bridge and Chain Bridge. Of these identified sites, only the Georgia Avenue site is known to have ultimately received a marker.

¹⁰ The Commission of Fine Arts minutes of February 12, 1931 note that an estimate for constructing the temporary pylons had been secured from Mr. Earley for \$275 each.

¹¹ CFA Minutes, February 12, 1931.

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Approved Entry Markers

Despite CFA's approval for the entry pylons, development of that particular design scheme appears to have been abandoned in the months following the February meeting. By April 1931, the pylon idea was replaced with a much more modest proposal that included smaller stone markers within a planted bed. The design of these markers, later delineated by architect Edward Donn, was based upon those of the Mason-Dixon Line and the Boundary stones of the District of Columbia.¹² The markers were to be made of Aquia Creek sandstone and were to be adorned with the Maryland Coat of Arms, or the Virginia seal on one side and the seal of the District of Columbia on the other.¹³ In order to negate any future boundary dispute such stones might incur, the CFA proposed that one side of the marker be inscribed with "Presented by the Garden Club of America." The NCPC heartily supported the new design proposal. In a letter to Charles Moore at CFA, Colonel Grant writes, "I am very glad to note that the Fine Arts Commission approves a design similar to the Boundary stones of the District of Columbia as it seems to me that the use of the design of markers approved by President Washington and used on the original District Line is unusually appropriate for anything done in and about the District in 1932."

After conducting a site visit of both the 16th Street and Wisconsin Avenue entrances to the District, the Commission of Fine Arts recommended that a locational plan be developed for the markers and their individual sites, in connection with a "suitable planting scheme." A May 1931 letter from Charles Moore notes that based upon bids received by the architect, Edward Donn, the markers could be delivered to the Garden Club, set in place, and carved with the coats of arms for \$500 per pair. In December 1931, following final approvals by NCPC, the Garden Club noted in its minutes that it would erect eight markers, including two at the "Highway Bridge, Mount Vernon;" two at Key Bridge; two at 16th Street and two at Chevy Chase Circle for a cost of \$3,900.00. The Club confirmed that each marker would bear the inscription "Erected by the

¹² The April 15 minutes of the Commission of Fine Arts indicate that it was the CFA that suggested the Mason-Dixon Line markers as a model for the entry markers. In particular the minutes state, "...the Garden Club of America had decided to accede to the suggestion of the Commission that marking of the entrances to the District of Columbia be mainly planting a marker of Aquia sandstone, like the markers used for the first survey of the Mason Dixon Line. In an April 25, 1931letter from Col. Grant from NCPC to Charles Moore at CFA, Grant notes, "I am very glad to note that the Fine Arts Commission approves a design similar to the Boundary stones of the District of Columbia as it seems to me that the use of the design of markers approved by President Washington and used on the original District Line is unusually appropriate for anything done in and about the District in 1932."

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Garden Club of America 1932" near the base of the markers on the side facing the road.¹⁴

Construction of the Entry Markers

The first pair of entry markers was erected on April 24, 1932 on the Virginia side of Key Bridge. Although erected within the established time-frame allotted for the George Washington Bicentennial celebration events of 1932 as initially intended by the Garden Club of America, no mention of the celebration or any association with it appears in the local press covering the dedication of the markers. The *Evening Star* printed a photograph of one of the entry markers on the Virginia side of Key Bridge with a caption noting that the marker is "one of the new sandstone markers which are being erected at entrances to the District of Columbia by the Garden Club of America." The caption does not identify the other sites.¹⁵

Over a year later, in October 1933, another pair of entry markers was dedicated at Chevy Chase Circle, along with the Francis G. Newlands Memorial Fountain. According to the *Evening Star*, the Chevy Chase markers were the "sixth to be placed by the Garden Club of America at important gateways to the city." The article notes that the other four pairs of markers were placed at the 16th Street entrance, at Wisconsin Avenue, at Georgia and Alaska avenues, and on the Virginia side of "both the Highway and Key Bridges." The article also states, "It is hoped that the Garden Club of America will similarly mark other entrances to the city as they are developed into impressive gateways."¹⁶

Of the locations identified in the article, pairs of markers still exist at Chevy Chase Circle and Wisconsin Avenue (at Western Avenue), while a single marker stands at the confluence of Georgia and Alaska Avenues. No markers are presently located at the 16th Street portal, and it is not believed that any markers were ever erected at that site.¹⁷ Neither pair of markers still stands on the Virginia side of the Highway Bridge (14th Street Bridge) or Key Bridge. Finally, two

¹⁴ Research report on GCA Markers, titled "Relevant Excerpts from Executive Committee Meeting Minutes and Board of Directors Meeting Minutes," 1/20/1931 through 4/13/1977, conducted for Alicia Ravanel for her research on the Chevy Chase Circle markers (from the personal files of Alicia Ravanel).

¹⁵ Between this April 1932 article and the 1933 dedication of the Chevy Chase Circle markers, no other newspaper articles could be found celebrating the erection of the other sets of entry markers.

¹⁶ "Notables Attend Francis Newlands Fount Dedication," The Evening Star, October 13, 1933, B-1.

¹⁷ In the "Report of the Commission of Fine Arts, July 1, 1929 to December 31, 1935" the report notes that no markers were erected at 16th Street, "Congress having named the Sixteenth Street entrance Montgomery Blair Portal, a suitable gateway awaits further action as to both design and funds for building."

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markers not mentioned in the article, but which were erected between 1933 and 1935¹⁸, survive *in situ* at Westmoreland Circle.¹⁹ While the Garden Club of America donated the markers themselves, the Virginia and Maryland Garden clubs, respectively, donated the plantings around the markers, and the American Automobile Association contributed small posts and chains encircling the markers.²⁰

Despite the Garden Club's intention to sponsor the entry markers as part of the George Washington Bicentennial celebration, the project evolved into a smaller-scale and longer-term one that extended beyond the confines of the February to November 1932 celebration. None of the press covering the marker dedications mentions any association with the 200th anniversary celebration and none of the reports reflecting on the events surrounding the celebration mentions the efforts of the Garden Club to beautify the city's entryways. Even the Garden Club of America in a 1942 report on its achievements, fails to mention the intended purpose of the markers. The report simply notes that markers "mark the entrances to Washington."²¹

Siting of Markers

The markers were always intended as ceremonial entry markers simply identifying the approaches into the city from Virginia and Maryland and not as official boundary markers. As noted above, the CFA, in its review of the markers, expressed some concerns over boundary disputes. This concern led the CFA to recommend that the GCA place an inscription on the markers, thus identifying them as memorial markers. A 1935 letter to Charles Moore from a Westmoreland Hills resident questioning the location of the stones validates the CFA's boundary dispute concern. The letter reads:

"I notice the nice Boundary stones which have been put on the circle of Massachusetts Avenue Extended. I like them very much, but if you will notice some time, you will see, I think, that they have not been rightly oriented. The

¹⁸ The Westmoreland Circle itself was opened in November 1932. The markers are known to have been erected by 1935 when a letter was written to the CFA regarding their siting on the Circle.

¹⁹ "Opening of Circle Gateway to Hills," The Washington Post, November 20, 1932, R2.

²⁰ "Fund to Aid Clubs Beautify Portals Pledged by A.A.A.," *The Evening Star*, May 4, 1927. Only two of the surviving markers—one at Westmoreland Circle and the one on Georgia Avenue at Kalmia and Alaska retain the chain fences.

²¹ "Draft of Report re: Arboretum and Other DC Gardens/Parks written by Peggy Nalls' great-aunt Martha (Mrs. T. H. B.) McKnight for Mrs. Gilbert Hitchcock, Incoming Chair of GCA National Capital Committee," 1942, (copy from the files of Alicia Ravenel and Friends of Chevy Chase Circle).

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Maryland District Line neither goes through the plane of either their surfaces, or through the corners. I think when you or your representative sees them you will see that they need turning so as to mark the boundary properly."

A return letter from Moore to the concerned citizen explains that the Westmoreland Circle markers, like those at Chevy Chase Circle, were not meant to mark the actual boundary line, but were simply a notification that one was passing a boundary.

Planting Elements

The Garden Club of America initially conceived of beautifying the city's entryways by planting certain approaches into the city. However, as the project focus turned to stone markers, the planting scheme became a secondary element. A description of the Key Bridge marker in the *Evening Star* states that "a planting of shrubs and ivy ground cover …will be protected by a temporary wire cover until it is well started" and press coverage of the dedication of the Chevy Chase markers similarly notes that the markers "are surrounded by plantings and shrubbery." The fragility of even these simple plantings was of immediate concern to those in charge. A letter dated May 31, 1933 from Col. Grant to Mr. Charles Moore provides fair warning:

"...you are advised that the ivy planting will be completed and will be cared for to the best of our ability. These plots, however, are so located that it may be difficult to keep them looking well. They are especially exposed to the sun and further, as you no doubt know, there is no water available in the immediate vicinity for sprinkling. However, an effort will be made to keep them going."

Another letter two years later from Charles Moore to Colonel Grant illustrates that the maintenance problem of the plantings persisted. In this letter, Moore notes that since the markers at the Virignia end of the "Highway Bridge" are located in "no man's land" and are thus not being cared for, that the "ladies do not wish to order the replanting of them until they could be assured that care will be given to them."

In addition to the plantings, the entry markers themselves soon became susceptible. A 1941 note in the Garden Club Minutes documents that "crown stones at entrance to District of Columbia" have been lost because of road widening. A 1977 entry indicates that the stone markers had all but been forgotten by the GCA when the two Wisconsin Avenue stones were "discovered" by

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contractors working on METRO construction at Friendship Heights.²²

Today, seven GCA markers remain in various states of preservation at four different entry points into the city (two at Westmoreland Circle, two at Wisconsin and Western Avenues; two at Chevy Chase Circle; and one on Georgia Avenue at Alaska and Kalmia). Of these seven markers, the pair at Chevy Chase Circle and the one on Georgia Avenue are surrounded by plantings, both of which are recent and maintained by local resident groups. The markers at Wisconsin Avenue emerge from the concrete sidewalks at the busy intersection, while those on Westmoreland Circle protrude from the surrounding grass.

²² The minutes state that the contractor "has come upon stone markers" and is "holding the markers subject to the GCA decision regarding disposition." Although the GCA suggested donating the markers to the National Arboretum, they were obviously re-installed, because the markers still stand today.

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F. ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

Name of Property Type: Stone Markers

Description:

The Garden Club Entrance Markers are upright, rectangular-shaped, dolmen-like stones constructed of Aquia Creek sandstone. Although the stones originally rose approximately five feet in height, they are now of varying heights depending on whether and how many times they have been knocked over and broken by erratic motorists and re-erected on their broken bases. The markers feature fluted shafts with fluting on-center running vertically the full length of the shaft, and horizontally along the edges, forming a defined edge or border.

On the markers located at the Maryland-District line, the seal of Maryland (the shield of the Calvert Coat of Arms) is located on one side towards the upper part of the stone shaft, with "Maryland" incised in uppercase lettering below the seal. On the opposing side and also at the upper part of the shaft, is a cartouche carving representing the District of Columbia and the commemoration of George Washington. "District of Columbia cartouche features a bas-relief depicting George Washington standing upon a pedestal with Lady Justice on the ground next to the pedestal holding a laurel wreath at its front. George Washington is flanked in the background by the dome of the Capitol building and a rising sun. In the foreground, an eagle is perched upon a garland emanating from a central laurel wreath.

An inscribed dedication "Erected by the Garden Club of America 1932" was meant to appear on one of the undecorated sides at the lower part of the marker; however, only one of the markers—the one located on the east side of Wisconsin Avenue at Western Avenue—still has its dedication visible (some may not have been inscribed, others may be below ground level, others may have broken off). Similarly, a metal fence comprised of four metal bollards with chains linked between them, originally surrounded the markers. Today, only two of the markers retain these chain fences. Finally, the markers were originally set within planting schemes designed by the Maryland and Virginia Garden Clubs, respectively. Today, only the markers on Georgia Avenue and Chevy Chase Circle are set within (recently) planted beds.

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Significance:

The Garden Club of America markers are stone markers that were erected to mark important entrances to the District of Columbia from Maryland and Virginia in 1932 and 1933. Originally planned to be dedicated as part of the 1932 George Washington Bicentennial celebration, the markers were constructed both concurrently with the series of events celebrating the 200th anniversary of Washington's birth and following the celebration. The markers were designed by local Washington, D.C. architect Edward Donn for the Garden Club of America which sponsored their erection in collaboration with the National Capital Parks and Planning Commission and under the review of the Commission of Fine Arts. Three pairs and one individual marker survive in various degrees of preservation.

The markers are significant both as surviving commemorative objects associated with the important George Washington Bicentennial Celebration, a national celebration commemorating the contributions made by the "first true American," and as landscape objects marking the District-Maryland and District-Virginia line at notable entrance points into the city. The ornamentation of the stone markers (i.e the depiction of George Washington) is emblematic of the efforts of the era to arouse nationalistic sympathies and, as such, provides an excellent artistic expression of the time.

The markers are significant under Criterion Consideration F with Art and Landscape Architecture as the Areas of Significance. The Period of Significance for the markers extends from 1932 to 1933, when the first and last of the markers are known to have been dedicated.

Registration Requirements:

Because many of the Garden Club Markers have been knocked over by motorists and remounted in slightly different locations from the original locations, it is not necessary that the markers be *in situ* in order to retain integrity.

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G. Geographical Data

Certain entryways into the District of Columbia from Maryland, namely Westmoreland Circle, Wisconsin and Western Avenues at Friendship Heights, Chevy Chase Circle, and Kalmia Street and Georgia Avenue.

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H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

The Multiple Property Listing of Garden Club of America Markers in Washington, D.C. is based upon archival research on the George Washington Bicentennial Celebration in D.C. and the role of the Garden Club of America and its local affiliates in contributing to that celebration through the erection of stone entry markers into the city. The D.C. Historic Preservation Office conducted the research in the summer/fall of 2006. Based upon the research, the original marked entryways were identified and an on-site investigation of those entryways took place. The surviving markers were then surveyed and photographs were taken. The Multiple Property Document and four individual nominations for the extant markers were then prepared (three pairs of markers, one single marker).

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Figure 1 (From "D.C. Memorial and Entry Pylons Will be Hastened," *The Evening Star*, n.d.)

