The National Association for Olmsted Parks, the nation's non-profit advocacy group for the preservation of historic parks, will hold a national conference in Rochester, New York, from September 30 through October 3, 1999. Entitled Recapturing Waterways in Historic Parks, Rochester’s Olmsted Legacy in a National Context, the three-day conference will feature keynote addresses by Robert Durand, Massachusetts Secretary of Environmental Affairs; Charles Beveridge, editor of the Olmsted papers; Susan West Montgomery, president, Preservation Action; and Louise Slaughter, U.S. Representative from the Rochester area. Several tours of Rochester’s Olmsted landscapes will be given, and case studies will describe current historic waterways rehabilitation work in Boston, Buffalo, Brooklyn and Seattle.

There will also be technical workshops on water pollution, invasive water vegetation and bank restoration. Registration materials are available from NAOP, 19 Harrison Street, Framingham, MA 01702-2313. The email address is naop@resource-network.com.

NAOP has moved to the Boston metro area.

Resource Network Inc. is NAOP's new national office. Vicki Carr, the president of Resource Network, is our new administrator. Hers is voice you may hear when you call. She has been the principal in charge during this transitional period of getting established and has been learning a great deal about the world of Olmsted and landscape preservation. She was delighted to discover that the park in Brooklyn where her grandmother went sliding in the snow (on her geography book) was one of the jewels of the senior Olmsted public spaces - Prospect Park.

The resignation in October of former NAOP Administrator Phyllis Knowles led to a review of NAOP's location. For a number of reasons, the review task force determined

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News from Around the Country

Louisville, Kentucky

The Louisville Olmsted Parks Conservancy is one of several major urban park organizations in the US named today to receive a $1 million grant from the Lila Wallace-Reader’s Digest Fund, which must be matched with $1.25 million in local private and public funds over the next four years of the grant period.

The Fund has approved grants totaling $9.6 million to enhance large and smaller neighborhood parks in urban communities around the country. The grants are part of the Fund’s Urban Parks Initiative, which has invested $25 million since 1994 to help improve the quality and quantity of urban parks for public use, particularly in low-income neighborhoods.

“We are very proud of the community involvement that enabled us to receive this grant,” said Mayor Dave Armstrong. “It is a strong testament to the public-private partnerships already in place between the Conservancy, the philanthropic community, and the City of Louisville,” he added.

“The fact that a national leader in the urban parks movement is investing in Louisville is recognition of what we have accomplished since the Conservancy’s founding in 1989,” said Susan Rademacher, the Conservancy’s Executive Director.

Since the Master Plan for renewing the Olmsted Parks and Parkways was completed in 1994, nearly $5 million has been invested in park improvements including the scenic recreation loop in Cherokee Park, the restoration of the 45-acre prairie atop Iroquois Park and a state-of-the-art youth baseball complex in Shawnee Park, among others.

“These improvements have resulted in a dramatic increase in park use and serve to enhance the quality of life in this community,” said Rademacher. “This new grant will help us take a big step forward in carrying out the master plan. Our focus will be to strike a balance between preserving these landscapes, and increasing the community’s involvement in activities ranging from volunteer opportunities in our Park Champions program to wellness and cultural arts programs,” she added.

“The grant will also enable us to continue the important work of enhancing and beautifying our three Olmsted flagship parks — Shawnee, Iroquois and Cherokee. We’re looking forward to a number of specific projects in the next four years including a comprehensive parks’ signage system, a Welcome Center in Shawnee, the Iroquois Amphitheater, and a new pavilion in Cherokee,” she said.

Buffalo, N.Y.

The Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy has received a major grant from the Lila Wallace-Reader’s Digest Fund for work in 3 of the system’s parks over the next 4 years. Buffalo’s Mayor Masiello had pledged $500,000 over 4 years as the City’s match.

Seattle, WA

The Seattle Landmarks Board has designated a second Olmsted Brothers-designed park as an historic Seattle landmark. Lincoln Park is an early example of the integration of passive and active recreation and includes the earliest playground designed by the Olmsted firm for Seattle. The eleven-acre site also includes the Lincoln Reservoir and the Bobby Morris Playfield.
News from Around the Country

Newark, New Jersey

SPARK (Save the Park at Riverbank) received a grant from the National Historic Trust's Preservation Services Fund to have Michael Mills evaluate the structures at the park. Mr. Mills is one of the top historic preservation people in the state of New Jersey. He spent Dec. 2, 1998, in the park, and SPARK is pleased to have his participation in the project.

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) approved the park's clean up plan, which SPARK developed.

About twenty-five school and youth groups took part in the Riverbank Park Mural Project, producing beautiful murals which depict the way this community values its park.

Boston, MA

The National Endowment for the Humanities has awarded a $200,000 grant to the Friends of Mount Auburn Cemetery to support the implementation of a comprehensive interpretive plan for Mt. Auburn.

Maine

Portland Parks and Recreation Department and Director Dana Souza won Greater Portland Landmark's 1998 Award for Landscape Preservation or Design. Their work beginning to implement the Deering Oaks Master Plan was cited.

On January 26, 1999, historians and landscape and preservation professionals met at the Camden Opera House to discuss the past, present, and future of the Amphitheater design by Fletcher Steele. Speakers included Earle Shestieworth, Director of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Patricia O'Donnell of LANDSCAPES, who prepared a restoration plan for the Amphitheater, and Charles Birnbaum, Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects and Coordinator of the National Park Service Historic Landscape Initiative. Speakers noted the tremendous value and significance of the Amphitheater, along with the complexity of caring for and managing this historic resource, now and in the future. The event was sponsored by the Independent Commission for the Library Grounds.

Atlanta, Georgia

The first project implementing the Master Plan for Restoration and Rehabilitation of the Druid Hills linear park is nearing the end of the design phase with work on the ground to begin late this Spring. One segment of the linear park, known as Oak Grove Park, will "come to life" as intended by the Olmsted plan and as a demonstration project of what the Master Plan means for each segment. Project cost is $1.5 million dollars including funds for a maintenance endowment. The Olmsted Linear Park Alliance (OLPA), the entity responsible for seeing the Master Plan implemented, hired as project consultant a team headed by local landscape architect Spencer Tunnell II and including Patricia O'Donnell of LANDSCAPES and Charles Beveridge, Editor of the Olmsted Papers, who served as historian on the Master Plan team.

Piedmont Park

The Piedmont Park Conservancy has been awarded $900,000 by the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund to be paid over the next 4 years and used for new programs and services in the park.

National Association for Olmsted Parks
At the October meeting of the NAOP Board of Trustees in Louisville, the Superintendent of Frederick Law Olmsted NHS ("Fairsted") was made an ex-officio member. The Board also decided that it would be desirable to include a "News from Fairsted" column as a regular feature of the NAOP newsletter.

Myra F. Harrison was recently appointed new superintendent of Olmsted NHS, which she will manage together with the Longfellow and John F. Kennedy National Historic Sites. Harrison is an 18-year veteran of the National Park Service, with varied experiences in cultural resources management, most recently as the Director of the NPS Northeast Cultural Resources Center. In that capacity, she was involved in many wide-ranging projects including the preservation of the Olmsted home and office at "Fairsted" which is now her operational base. Harrison replaces Rolf Diamant, who is currently in charge of the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park in Vermont.

The new superintendent welcomed members of the NAOP Executive Committee as part of their meeting at "Fairsted" on Saturday, March 7, and expressed her enthusiasm for managing the site's outstanding "collection of collections" and for extending positive collaboration and communication efforts with NAOP.

A number of important preservation and public information projects were completed in 1998, making this a very busy year for Olmsted NHS. Chief among these was the restoration of the "Fairsted" landscape to its c.1930 appearance following a four-year program undertaken by park maintenance in collaboration with the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation. These restoration efforts preserve the residential and working environment of the Olmsted family and firm and provide park visitors with a "living exhibit" of Olmsted's design principles and craftsmanship.

Noteworthy publications completed in 1998 included a brochure featuring the Olmsted Archives, highlighting the collection holdings and the significance of research opportunities afforded by approximately 1,000,000 historic records preserved at "Fairsted."

A website was also developed for Internet access, which features the Olmsted Archives, visitor and education programs, and the work of the Olmsted Center.

Archives processing and conservation activity continues at a rapid pace, with the bulk of processing shifted from "Fairsted" to the Olmsted Archives Laboratory at Springfield, MA. By close of 1998, 60% or 90,000 items in the plans and drawings collections had been catalogued, conserved and placed in permanent storage for long-term preservation and researcher access; over 600,000 series collection records have been archivally processed and rehoused.

The Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, based at "Fairsted", recently completed the successful rehabilitation of the Wright Brothers Memorial in Dayton, OH. This 27-acre park and memorial plaza was originally planned and constructed in consultation with the Olmsted firm between 1922 and 1940 as a tribute to Wilbur and Orville Wright, Dayton-born inventors of the first powered airplane. The memorial was transferred to Wright Patterson Air Force Base in 1978 marking the 75th anniversary of powered flight.

Rededication of the park and memorial plaza took place in August, 1998, after a two-year rehabilitation program. The Olmsted Center made use of the extensive collection of drawings and design records in the Olmsted Archives, interfacing these records and historical design specifications with contemporary expertise from within and outside the National Park Service in guiding actual preservation fieldwork on Wright Brothers Hill.
Rolf Diamant has left his position as Superintendent of the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site (Fairsted) to become the first Superintendent of the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park in Woodstock, VT. We in the historic landscape preservation community owe an enormous debt of gratitude to Rolf for the superb job he has done at Fairsted. Thanks to his efforts over the past 11 years, the Olmsted National Historic Site has become a valuable multi-disciplinary center for the study and preservation of American landscapes. We also extend a welcome to Myra Harrison, who succeeds Rolf as superintendent.

New Newsletter Schedule

Next Issue
Fall 1999

This Spring issue of Field Notes begins a new schedule for the NAOP newsletter approved by the Board of Trustees at the October Board meeting in Louisville. There will be two full newsletters a year - Spring and Fall - complete with “Reprints” inaugurated last year as an insert with the newsletter that can be collected separately as the reader chooses. In between, there will be one Update (or more as needed) edition. This year, in honor of the Centennial of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), NAOP will have a special edition update in time for the ASLA celebration conference in mid-September in Boston.

A new feature begins in this issue as well: “News From Fairsted” will appear as a regular column in the full newsletter.

Missing in this issue (on purpose): the list of books and the membership form of past issues. Why? New formats are in the works for both. Stay tuned. In the meantime, please write, phone, or email NAOP if you want to order a book (Workbook or Book) or if you want to give a gift membership in NAOP.

Fall 1999 Deadline — September 15, 1999
Spring 2000 Deadline — March 15, 1999

Watch for the Special Edition Update in honor of the ASLA conference in Boston.

New Publications from the Library of American Landscape History

The lead volume of the ASLA Centennial Reprint Series was written by Charles Eliot, Landscape Architect (1902) and is being republished this year.

Also forthcoming from the Library are

Pioneers of American Landscape Design, An Encyclopedia (Charles A. Birnbaum, Editor)
A Modern Arcadia: Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. and the Plan for Forest Hills Gardens (Susan Klaus); and
Walks and Talks of an American Farmer in England (by Frederick Law Olmsted Sr.)
Though a disappointingly small number of members (5%) responded to the survey sent out last summer, the results are providing much food for thought and discussion, and direction for some change.

NAOP members are diversified geographically with New York and Massachusetts having the strongest showing. We are a gray or graying group. We consider ourselves to be community activists: we give both money and time to our local parks. Many of us are affiliated with an Olmsted landscape. We are interested in legislative alerts and “landscape in danger” notifications. We want more information on community action strategies and case studies.

Clearly, the main reason for joining NAOP is the desire to belong to a network of “Olmsteders” for the communication and sharing of knowledge to be used for preserving parks. “Reprints” - introduced as an insert in the newsletter last year - got rave reviews.

Field Notes needs someone to be on the watch for new publications - books and articles. The focus is on the Olmsted firm, of course. Now that she has retired from her role as book buyer for the Saint Louis Zoo, Caroline Loughlin has also retired from her role on the Newsletter Committee. Thanks for keeping us well-read all those years, Caroline! If you would like to take on this important role for Field Notes, please contact the NAOP Office.

For Spring 1999 the Trustees are embarking on a Membership Campaign, where each Trustee will invite people to join, with the goal of each bringing three new members to NAOP. Of course, the more the merrier, and anyone else who would like to participate in the campaign should call the office (508) 820-7676 for support materials.

With this being the ASLA Centennial year, it is an ideal time to remind our friends and colleagues of the important work of NAOP. We need a substantial membership base to create the type of advocacy and information network necessary to preserve the Olmsted landscapes. Think about others we should ensure belong to NAOP.

Betsy Shure-Gross, a founding member and Trustee of NAOP, is now the special assistant for community preservation to the Massachusetts State Secretary of Environmental Affairs, Robert Durand. Betsy formerly was chair of the group, Historic Massachusetts.
Is There a Future for Trash Cans in Parks?

Will this sign soon be standard in our parks? Will trash cans in parks soon be a relic from the (uninformed) past?

Maybe.

An interesting experiment came up in conversation as the group touring the smaller parks of Louisville during last October’s NAOP conference stood in Central Park. It seems this experiment “worked” in a non-Olmsted park in Louisville so the practice was extended to other parks. Very simply, no trash cans were put in the park for a period of time. Result: almost no litter in the park and, of course, no cans to empty.

Patricia O’Donnell related the experience of Rochester, N.Y., in this regard: Seneca and Genesee Parks experienced a 60 - 75% reduction in trash when trash cans were removed. And in Maine, state parks evidently have signs posted to the effect that all trash is to be packed out. There are no trash receptacles available. Maine is extending this practice to city parks. Hearing these accounts, the current president of Atlanta’s Olmsted Linear Park Alliance remembered a member of the master plan advisory committee making the very same suggestion: no trash cans so park users would realize there was no place for trash in the park. She resolved to push the idea anew upon her return home.

Is there a trend here...?

Wave Hill Conference

NAOP Leaders Charles A. Birnbaum and Cynthia Zaitzevsky presented papers at the Wave Hill conference in April. From his perspective as Coordinator, Historic Landscape Initiative for the National Park Service Heritage Preservations Services, Charles spoke on How Did We Get Here? Overview of An Era. Cynthia’s presented Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.: History, Preservation and the Planning Process. The Symposium If Only We Knew: Landscape Preservation in Context, 1890-1950 was jointly sponsored by Wave Hill, NPSHPS, the Garden Club of America and the Cultural Landscape Foundation.

New NAOP home

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that a change of location was in the best interests of NAOP. Boston quickly emerged as the best choice: the presence of Fairsted, the Olmsted National Historic Site; the Harvard Graduate School of Design over which FLO, Jr. presided at its inception and where so many of the Olmsted firm matriculated or taught; Historic Massachusetts (into which the Massachusetts Association for Olmsted Parks “folded” several years ago); and a strong group of members and former trustees in the metro area provided a strong pull for NAOP to locate there as well. Co-Chair Arleyn Levee, past Co-Chairs Newt Levee and Caroline Loughlin, Evan Levee (son) and his roommate all deserve our gratitude for making the move happen. The boxes and file cabinets containing the nearly 20 years of NAOP’s institutional history arrived safely (if later than planned) at Resource Network’s office on a snowy New Year’s Eve.

Resource Network will be providing membership services, publications support (as in producing and mailing out this newsletter) conference and special event support, and bookkeeping services. The NAOP executive committee had the opportunity to meet with Vicki Carr and staff member Geovannie Figueroa at an early March meeting at Fairsted to learn about NAOP’s new “administrative home base.”

National Association for Olmsted Parks
The following individuals were elected to the NAOP Board of Trustees at the annual meeting in Kansas City, MO, in April:

**Ethan Carr**, historical landscape architect National Park Service (Denver, CO); **Deirdre Cunningham**, landscape curator for the George Eastman House in Rochester, NY; **Faye Harwell**, landscape architect in private practice in Washington, D.C.; and **Joe Hoerner**, director of property management for the Chicago Park District (IL).

**Mary Fox** (Prospect Park, Brooklyn, NY) was elected Co-Chair and will serve with **Don Harris** (Seattle, WA) this coming year.

**Caroline Loughlin** (Boston, MA) returns to the Board as Treasurer. **Paul Foster** (Denver, CO), **Lucy Lawliss** (Atlanta, GA), and **Alida Silverman** (Atlanta, GA) continue as Vice-Presidents for Membership, Publications, and Secretary respectively.

Great thanks go to departing Board Co-Chair, Arleyn Levee, who remains on the Board as Immediate Past Co-Chair, and Board Members, Charles Beveridge, Charles Birnbaum, Kenneth Helphand, Nancy LaColla, and Cornelia Hahn Oberlander.

Anyone interested and available to help at the NAOP Booth in Boston at the ASLA Conference? Please let the NAOP Office know and we'll schedule you in.