CHICAGO'S PARKS, “SECOND TO NONE!”

Chicago is more than the image created by Carl Sandburg's reference to “the city of broad shoulders.” It is a city of spacious boulevards, breathtaking vistas and beautiful parks. Often called the “second city,” its prominent position in the roster of good urban design is second to none. It is the city which rose from the ashes of the great 1871 fire to develop a rich architectural history and to encircle this “Phoenix” with a belt of green urban parks and a 26-mile stretch of “forever, open, clear and free” blue lakefront. Its park history is punctuated by such noteworthy names as Olmsted, Jenney, Burnham, Cleveland and Jensen, who often collaborated with such famous architects as Richardson, Sullivan, Burnham and Wright. It is no wonder, therefore, that Chicago is proud of its metropolis and eager to show it off to the thousands of visitors who pass its way every year. This year it is the site of the National Association for Olmsted Parks Annual Conference and you, all of you, will be its guests. These notes and thoughts on the windy city, the hub of the Midwest, will help to prepare you for a unique, thrilling experience.

Sandra L. Higgins
1982 NAOP Conference Coordinator

Olmsted's Chicago

Chicago has a great tradition in its parks. The Chicago School of Architecture is well recognized as a flowering of creative talent in the period of expansion after the Civil War. What is less well known is that at the same time, supported by the same active citizens and the same economic boom, other movements to build the city determined its future for the next hundred years.

Continued on page 6

Third Annual Olmsted Conference Set for Chicago June 3-6

Riverside, an “Olmsted Community,” is Added Attraction

Planning for the Third Annual Conference of the National Association for Olmsted Parks is well underway in Chicago. The Conference will convene on June 3, 1982 and will be hosted by the Chicago-based Friends of the Parks. The program committee, chaired by Victoria Post Ranney, will continue to develop the goals and objectives of the previously successful 1980 Buffalo and 1981 Massachusetts Conferences.

Chicago's rich and varied architectural traditions are nationally recognized. Its equally impressive landscape heritage is relatively unknown. The Third National Conference will feature the work of Frederick Law Olmsted and the other mid-west park planners: William LeBaron Jenney, Jens Jensen and Daniel Burnham who transformed the marshes, sand dunes and treeless prairies, stretching along the shores of Lake Michigan, into the parks and boulevard system unique to Chicago.

The theme of the conference—Olmsted and the Historic Landscape: Revisited and Renewed—is appropriate to Chicago where the design and construction of parks and urban open spaces played a large part in creating, out of a sprawling, immigrant-filled city of slaughterhouses, rail yards and heavy industry, the urban setting of the modern metropolitan complex. Olmsted's humanism and social vision gave parks a role in socializing cities like Chicago which had been shaped by raw economic forces.

The theme is also appropriate to Chicago, as the creator of the 1893 Columbian Exposition, whose vision of the "Great White City," designed in a collaboration between Olmsted and the leading architects of his day, was to mobilize an entire turn-of-the-century generation toward the task of trans-

Continued on page 11

Photo by Xandi

Olmsted's Wooded Isle, once a centerpiece of the Columbian Exposition, to be revisited during conference tours of the Chicago parks
"ART OF THE OLMSTED LANDSCAPE" METROPOLITAN MUSEUM EXHIBITION WILL TRAVEL IN COMING YEARS

Following a successful run at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the newest Olmsted exhibition, The Art of the Olmsted Landscape, sponsored by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, will start its road tour to Boston, Hartford, Louisville and elsewhere under the sponsorship of the Gallery Association of New York State, Museums, institutions and organizations interested in contracting for the exhibition in 1982-3 should make arrangements directly with Ms. Kevan Moss at the Gallery Association, Box 345, Hamilton, New York 13346, (315) 824-2510.

The exhibition, which was directed by NAOP Trustee Gail T. Guillot with the collaboration of Bruce Kelly and Murry Gelberg, was funded largely by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Arthur Ross Foundation in New York. It occupies approxi mately 1,800 sq. feet and includes forty waist-high exhibition panels containing the descriptive text and numerous photographs and plans depicting aspects of the Olmsted landscape, such as the romantic tradition, the Victorian influence, the contrast between city and park, the use of elements borrowed from abroad, the sequential experience and the use of scenery to lure the visitor ever deeper into a park, the separation of traffic and the imaginative use of turf, wood and water to create bold landforms and open vistas which appear so natural but are essentially man-made. Olmsted’s integration of architecture into the landscape, always in a subordinate role, and his profuse use of plant materials are also well shown and explained. For both the newcomer to Olmsted’s world and the experienced landscape planner the elements of Olmsted’s careful planning are well catalogued and depicted by the panels.

A major centerpiece of the exhibition is a 24-foot-long model of Central Park, Olmsted and Vaux’s first effort, as it appeared in 1873, when many now-gone buildings were still there, and most of the later additions were not, and when the Metropolitan Museum of Art was but a small foreshadowing of its present-day structure. The model, and the date chosen for it, express accurately the total Olmsted and Vaux plan for Central Park, though naturally the trees would take many more years to mature. Additional elements of the exhibition are a wall of some 22 photos describing the Olmsted work in New York City, which could serve as a model for another community wishing to depict Olmsted’s local work in greater detail, and several attractive banners linking Olmsted’s work to that of other architects and planners.

A very handsome, two-part, boxed catalogue, a tribute to the Arthur Ross Foundation, and a color poster of the Bow Bridge as it once was when profusely surrounded by plantings, funded by the American Express Foundation, complete the exhibition. Both are available for purchase wherever the exhibition tours.

The catalogue box, in forest green, includes one 38-page volume on Olmsted’s work in New York City, covering Central, Riverside, Morningside, Prospect and Fort Greene Parks, as well as Ocean and Eastern Parkways, plus a foreword by Arthur Ross and an introduction by Bruce Kelly, along with various essays by other scholars and experts. The other volume, running 169 pages, includes definitive articles by nine authors: Art of the Olmsted Landscape, by Bruce Kelly; Design and Designers: 19th Century Innovation, by James Marston Fitch; Influences Across the Water: Olmsted and England, by Stephen Rettig; The Fight for Central Park, by Ian Stewart; The Olmsted Renaissance: A Search for National Purpose, by Albert Fein; Landscape Design as Conservation Reform, by Geoffrey Blanding; Central Park: The Genius of the Place, by Henry Hope Read; Olmsted on the Road: A View of Paradise, by Jean Gardner McClintock; and Olmsted: A Psychohistorical Perspective, by Melvin Kaltus. A selected bibliography and a listing of the Olmsted designs compiled by Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., and an introduction by Ms. Guillot are also included.

The Art of the Olmsted Landscape is another major step forward in introducing the neophyte to the importance of Frederick Law Olmsted’s work, and that of his associates, in New York and across the country, and an important tool for deeper understanding of his technique and innovation by the landscape architect and designers. Communities sponsoring the exhibition will also find it a useful tool, in cooperation with NAOP, for starting or strengthening their own citizen organizations for park preservation. For those who may have missed it in New York, we hope there will be an opportunity to see it on the road in 1982 and 1983.

The 2-vol. catalogue, boxed, may be ordered from The Metropolitan Museum of Art Book Shop, 82nd Street and Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10028, for $35.00 plus $3.95 postage and handling and sales tax when applicable.

Principles of Olmsted’s Design

Charles Beveridge proposes "Seven S" guide

SCENERY:
Design of “passages of scenery,” and a liberal use of plantings, even in the smallest spaces and in areas with the most active use.

SUITEMATIBILITY:
Creation of designs that are in keeping with the natural scenery and topography: respect for, and full utilization of, the “genius of the place.”

SANITATION:
 Provision for adequate drainage and similar engineering considerations; creation of designs to promote both physical and mental health of users.

SUBORDINATION:
Subordination of all details, all features, both of natural and artificial materials, to the overall design and the effect intended for it to achieve.

SEPARATION:
Separation of areas done in different styles, so that “incongruous mixture of styles” will not dilute the intended effect of each; separation of ways, in order to insure safety of use and reduce distractions for those using the space; separation of uses that conflict with one another.

SPACIOUSNESS:
Creation of designs that make the area seem larger than it is: bays and headlands of plantings, indefinite boundaries.

STYLE:
Designing in specific styles for particular effects: primarily in the Pastoral style (open greensward with scattered trees, groves and bodies of water) for soothing, restful atmosphere, and in the Picturesque style (heavy planting, especially with shrubs, on broken terrain) for a sense of the richness and bounteouness of nature, with chiaroscur effects of light and shade to produce a sense of mystery.
Conferences Do Count
CONCERNED CITIZENS ARE PUTTING IT TOGETHER

The organization of the Massachusetts Association for Olmsted Parks, the newest and largest associate of the National Association for Olmsted Parks, is a direct outgrowth of the 1981 NAOP National Conference in Boston, Brookline and Cambridge in April. The new organization is composed primarily of those who came together—out of their personal and professional interest in and concern for the future of the Olmsted landscape in the Bay State and elsewhere—to create the national conference. They stayed and worked together to become the MAOP: Landscape architects, planners and conservationists, historians, park professionals, business and community activists joined in a continuing commitment to park preservation in Massachusetts.

The purposes of MAOP are:

To develop a commitment for action, to preserve, protect, rehabilitate and maintain the Olmsted landscape in Massachusetts;

To stimulate public- and private-sector acceptance of their responsibility for these landscape assets;

To promote knowledge and understanding of the Olmsted landscape and parks through publications, lectures, meetings and other educational activities;

To locate, evaluate and insure the preservation of and access to Olmstedian archival materials;

To act as a liaison with other organizations in order to foster and develop cooperation, the exchange of information and action for the preservation, protection and use of Olmsted landscapes and other parks and open spaces.

MAOP has adopted its by-laws and is seeking incorporation and tax-exemption in Massachusetts. It has also established a number of on-going programs. MAOP’s Inventory Committee was organized in June to prepare a thematic, multiple-resource nomination for the remaining parks designed by the Olmsted firm in Massachusetts, but not yet on the National Register of Historic Places. The work will be undertaken by MAOP members together with faculty and students at the Radcliffe Seminars Landscape Design Program, the Boston University Preservation Studies Program and the Harvard Graduate School of Design and is assisted by the staff of the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site and the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Patricia Weslowski, Executive Director of the Commission, chairs the Inventory Committee; Dr. Cynthia Zaitzevsky, NAOP Adviser and MAOP Board member, heads the subcommittee on research and Eleanor McPeck, Radcliffe Seminars Landscape Design Program faculty member and MAOP advisor, will develop the student program and the inventory form which will be used for the project.

The Massachusetts Inventory of Olmsted Parks will not be used only as a research document and preservation tool, but also as a strategy to initiate or increase community organization for park preservation throughout the state. A “contacts” subcommittee, composed of Betsy Shure Gross, MAOP Chairman, Carla Wyman Benka, Secretary, and Rick Shea, a staff member of The Metropolitan Planning Council, has been formed to visit five cities and towns in the state: Lynn, Lowell, Springfield, Holyoke and Worcester, where the parks are to be surveyed. The committee will introduce the inventory project in each, explain its purposes and uses, and by visiting the Conservation, Parks, Planning and Historical Commissions, the Chamber of Commerce, universities and local newspapers, radio and TV stations, it will generate state-wide interest in and publicity for the project.

The encouragement of corporate and institutional involvement is a key component in strengthening the work of the local and state park advocates. MAOP can well publicize the corporate concern and commitment to historic parks and landscapes which have been demonstrated by The Parkway Development Company. Through its President, Paul Faraca, now the Co-Chairman of MAOP, the company has assumed a three-year maintenance commitment for a significant portion of Leverett Pond in Olmsted Park in Brookline. In the face of severe Federal budget cuts and the Massachusetts “2½” tax amendments, such examples of support can provide a model to other companies throughout the state.

The Urban Park Ranger Project proposal constitutes another MAOP program. Working closely with Boston Parks Commissioner John Vitagliano, also a MAOP Board Member, a subcommittee which includes representatives of the City, the National Park Service, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management, as well as MAOP, has been created to establish a pilot ranger program in some of Boston’s parks in the summer of 1982.

A third program involves the Design Committee, currently chaired by landscape designers Sally Baer and Kate Erickson, which in the process of planning a forum on the principles of Olmsted’s designs while working toward a publication on the subject, especially applicable to a Massachusetts audience.

The Board of Directors of MAOP clearly reflects the diverse interests which were represented at the April conference, as well as a wide and growing interest and commitment to the preservation of Olmsted’s parks.

The officers, trustees and advisors to MAOP are:

**Officers:**
- Chair: Betsy Shure Gross
- Co-Chair: Paul Faraca
- Vice Chair: Arleen LeVee
- Vice Chair: Cynthia Zaitzevsky
- Treasurer: John Furlong
- Clerk: Elizabeth Lawrence
- Corresponding Secretary: Carla Wyman Benka

**Board members:**
- Eleanor Ames
- Timothy Coppolla
- Charles W. Eliot, II
- Richard Heath
- Henry Lee
- Cornelia Hanna
- McMurtie
- John Vitagliano
- Lawrence Zuelke

**Advisors:**
- Alexander W. Allport
- David Gillespie
- Eugene Beal
- Shary Page Berg
- Thomas Paine
- Rubert Davis
- Patricia Weslowski
- Betsy Shure Gross

Chairman, Massachusetts Association for Olmsted Parks
FAIRSTED EXPANDS VISITOR SERVICES

Months full of activity have followed the April 26 dedication of the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site attended by many NAOP members. Park staff at the Brookline, Massachusetts, site are engaged in a variety of projects ranging from interpretation to restoration to cataloguing.

Effective in October, the site now extends visitor hours in anticipation of the busy New England fall and winter seasons. Visitors are welcome on Friday, Saturday and Sunday afternoons from 12:00 to 4:30. On the main floor of the house is an exhibit on Olmsted's life and work prepared by Charles Beveridge of the Olmsted Papers project, which includes a number of landscape drawings and photographs. Central Park, the first and most celebrated Olmsted project, is the feature of a 20-minute slide presentation, "The Heart of the City," narrated by Julie Harris and Robert Preston, which is offered regularly to visitors. Park Rangers provide special tours of the office area used by the Olmsteds and their successors. The many rooms offer a glimpse of the evolution of landscape architecture as a profession in this country.

Visitors who wish more information on Olmsted or a reminder of their visit may take advantage of the site's bookstore which offers a number of publications from brief reprints of articles to major biographical studies. The bookstore is operated in cooperation with Eastern National Park & Monument Association, a non-profit organization whose proceeds are used to fund a variety of interpretive and research projects in more than 100 National Park Service areas. A list of publications is available.

The interpretive staff is developing ideas for future programming. These include a permanent exhibit to replace the present information on temporary loan to the site and a slide presentation focusing on Olmsted's life, his work in Boston and across the country, and his influence as the father of landscape architecture. Olmsted's sons, partners and successors will also be highlighted in future exhibits.

As the site themes are refined, the staff hopes to provide off-site programs for special interest groups and local community organizations upon request. Special on-site programs can also be arranged for groups with particular interests, such as landscape architects or horticulturists. A diverse lecture series is planned for winter months.

Information on fall and winter activities, directions to the site or arrangements for group tours can be obtained by writing or calling: The Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, 99 Warren Street, Brookline, Massachusetts 02146—Tel: 617-566-1689.

Corporate Support Aids Park Preservation

Community organization for park preservation is one mechanism for bringing out the best in a community to work on what is best for the community. The High Street Hill Association of Leverett Pond is finding also that the worst of times brings out the best in people. And corporations! One of the first companies in the Boston area to respond to the cutbacks in Federal funding for historic landscape restoration and rehabilitation and "Proposition 2 1/2" as the state-wide tax amendment is known there, was the Parkway Development Company, a subsidiary of the Raymond Cattle Company of Boston. Early this fall the Brookline Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to ratify a maintenance contract between Parkway Development and the town, which had been initiated by the High Street Hill Association. "Proposition 2 1/2" as the state-wide tax amendment is known there, was the Parkway Development Company, a subsidiary of the Raymond Cattle Company of Boston. Early this fall the Brookline Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to ratify a maintenance contract between Parkway Development and the town, which had been initiated by the High Street Hill Association of Leverett Pond. The agreement will help to stabilize and maintain conditions at the Pond during the next three years. Under its terms Parkway Development will direct their landscape contractor to maintain a portion of the adjacent landscape whenever their own area is cared for.

This project is the first of its kind in Brookline and it should provide a model for other such agreements across the state. The Massachusetts Association for Olmsted Parks "contacts" committee, which worked out the agreement with the Friends of Leverett Pond, will be sharing this model of community organization for park preservation with the other communities across the state which it plans to visit. The agreement is also another direct outgrowth of the 1981 NAOP National Conference.

One might say that Parkway Development hardly knew what they were letting themselves in for when they offered to host the "Olmsted in Brookline" luncheon in April. Since then they have become increasingly and deeply committed to the creation of the Massachusetts Association for Olmsted Parks and expanded their interest in historic restoration of buildings to include the historic landscape as well. Such is the power of the Olmsted dream!

Betsy Shure Gross, Founder,
The High Street Hill Association Friends of Leverett Pond

Co-Chair Honored

The Massachusetts Conservation Council has awarded its 1981 Land and Conservation Award to Betsy Shure Gross for her leadership of the 1981 NAOP National Conference held in Boston, Brookline and Cambridge in April. In accepting the award Mrs. Gross thanked the 43 organizations which constitute the Conservation Council for their recognition of NAOP and its importance in creating a nationwide network of community organizations for park preservation. "I am honored by the presentation of this Land and Conservation Award," said Mrs. Gross. "It has been earned and deserved by many, many individuals who are not here with me on the podium tonight. I accept the award on behalf of all of them and pledge to you our continuing concern for and commitment to the Olmsted landscape in Massachusetts and throughout the United States."
FRIENDS OF THE PARKS, HOSTS TO NAOP CONFERENCE

Friends of the Parks is a not-for-profit, civic organization that was formed six years ago in an effort to upgrade and protect Chicago's parks. Friends is a group of volunteers consisting of park lovers and outdoor enthusiasts from all over the Chicago area. The main objective of Friends of the Parks is to promote one of Chicago's most valuable assets—its beautiful park system.

Friends is actively involved in improving the park system and its recreation services by bringing together neighborhood groups to work on both city-wide issues and the problems of local parks. The issues Friends has helped them with are many and varied, ranging from litter to vandalism, from maintenance to recreation facilities and programs.

In its six-year history, Friends of the Parks has served as an effective catalyst for bringing business and community resources into Chicago's parks. Most recently Friends has:

- Opened bidding for park concessions in Chicago bringing better food to the parks as well as doubling the revenue for the Chicago Park District.
- Donated the first piece of public sculpture to the parks in over 20 years.
- Recruited over 1,000 kids and adults to pick up litter and plant flowers in the annual "Give Your Park a Pick-up" day.
- Conducted a Neighborhood Park Leadership Conference where 100 community residents came to learn how to plan for their own park improvements.

Currently, besides the 1982 Olmsted Conference, Friends is working on:

- Budget Study—Friends is conducting an in-depth study of the park and recreational facilities in America's 30 largest cities. Friends is forming a network of individuals representing parks throughout the city to share solutions to local park problems.
- Tree Fund—Friends is working with the Chicago Park District to establish a volunteer tree donation and planting program for the parks.

In these and many other ways, Friends of the Parks provides a way for people who share a mutual interest in their parks to meet together and actually accomplish something of importance to them as well as the Chicago area.

Elizabeth Donadio
Friends of the Parks

JACKSON PARK RESTORATION UNDER WAY

On October 7, 1981, landscape planting commenced in the western portion of Jackson Park east of Cornell Drive. The Woodlawn Community Development Corporation (WCDC) as an agent of the Chicago Park District was awarded an innovative grant for $179,000 from the U.S. Department of Interior, Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service. WCDC was given the responsibility to develop a landscape and recreation plan for Jackson Park that would benefit the citizens of the surrounding southside neighborhoods of Woodlawn, Hyde Park and South Shore.

Jackson Park, due to the natural depletion of its plantings and its historic significance, was in need of refurbishing. The City of Chicago Department of Planning and Community Development and the Chicago Park District decided to involve citizens in the re-landscaping of the western portion of the park and the upgrading of the recreational programs presently offered. WCDC was selected as the organizational vehicle to bring this about.

WCDC is a community economic development corporation located in the predominately black neighborhood of Woodlawn. It was selected for this role because of its impressive record of community re-development attained in cooperation with neighborhood residents.

WCDC developed a Work Plan to govern the activities that would result from the innovative grant:

- Develop a landscape plan consistent with the historic character of Jackson Park while simultaneously meeting the Chicago Park District's needs for safety and utility.
- Hire and train young adults from the community in landscape maintenance procedures to prepare them for employment as landscapers in private industry.
- Conduct a career awareness program at Hyde Park Career Academy, a black Chicago public high school. Introduce freshmen and sophomores to careers in architecture, landscape architecture, graphic design, interior design and landscape contracting.
- Supplement existing recreation programs offered by the Chicago Park District in Jackson Park. Add new classes, tours in natural history, floral arranging, ornithology and other subjects.
- Conduct public meetings to solicit ideas and exchange technical information as a prelude to the preparation of the landscape plan. Responses should be encouraged from the elderly, handicapped and ornithologists.

WCDC retained as consultants Landscape Consortium of Chicago. The firm is an interdisciplinary design/build company involved in the fields of landscape architecture, civil engineering and landscape contracting. The owner, Drex Spurlock Wilson, is a member of the American Society of Landscape Architects and the only black landscape architect in Illinois.

The Japanese Garden has been beautifully restored.

The planting plan developed by Landscape Consortium captures much of the spirit of Olmsted's plan. Important vistas are retained, shrub massings along the banks of the west lagoon are replenished and multicolor, over-story and ornamental trees are used strategically. The planting plan was presented to citizens in two public meetings organized by the Friends of the Parks. The plan was subsequently approved by the citizens and the Landscape Division of the Chicago Park District. It is anticipated that landscaping under this grant will be completed by December, 1981, and can be seen in its first bloom season during NAOP's forthcoming National Conference in June.

REGISTER NOW FOR CHICAGO
JUNE 3-6, 1982
Continued from page 1

A group of capable and determined men who had first joined forces in defense of the Union campaigned when the war was over for stricter control over the slaughterhouses, clean water and streets, and a sound school system. They established many of the city's cultural institutions and were responsible for its ring of boulevards and parks. They had a vision of what the city might become, a practical ability to get things done, and an appreciation of artistic talent. To plan their largest park—the South Park, now Washington and Jackson Parks and the Midway Plaisance—they called on the leading park designer of his time, Frederick Law Olmsted.

Olmsted came to Illinois in 1868 to design a new community, the suburb of Riverside, and he stayed to design Chicago's huge South Park. There the ambitious plans he proposed for an aquatic pleasure ground were allowed to drop after the Great Fire of 1871. When over twenty years later Olmsted returned to Chicago as designer of the World's Columbian Exposition grounds in 1893, he found that people of all sorts loved his parks. He then had another chance to create a water setting and activities for the people. This he did, creating inspired precedents for total planning. The Exposition initiated the City Beautiful movement which Daniel Burnham's Chicago Plan of 1909 epitomized. Olmsted's stepson, John C. Olmsted, and son, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., worked with Burnham on the park designs.

Olmsted's plans for Chicago are useful guides even today for those who care about the parks and urban environment. They provide an insight into how the parks were meant to be used, and how they should be used today. Moreover, the history of how the parks were developed, and how Olmsted was chosen to design them, provides an instructive example of Chicago's civic leadership at its best. Chicago, and the country, have much to learn from the story of how a great city and a great man one hundred years ago established Chicago's great heritage in its parks.

The "Civilized" Men of Chicago Start a Park System

As General Secretary of the Sanitary Commission Olmsted had come into contact with the country's most serious leaders in philanthropy and public health, since the Commission coordinated a network of some seven thousand aid societies and distributed their money, supplies, and clothing to Union soldiers. In Chicago a group of men who would be the movers of the city's creative postwar period first joined forces in support of the Union and the Sanitary Commission. Two of the most important for Olmsted were Dr. John Rauch and Ezra McCagg.

In 1867 McCagg had drawn up a bill to establish a huge park south of the city in the suburb of Hyde Park. The South Park extended from the lake into the "wilderness" and contained over a thousand acres. It was the city's largest park. Lt. Governor William Bross talked with Olmsted about it and was an enthusiastic supporter. Paul Cornell, the wealthy real estate developer of Hyde Park, spent the winter of 1867 in Springfield pushing the bill through the legislature. When it was turned down in a referendum, its proponents did not give up. The sanitary reformers combined with the real estate interests. They set their sights higher and worked for three bills which would ring the city with parks on the North, West and South Sides. In February 1869, all three passed, and those of the West and South Park Commissions were approved in referendum.

The passage of the park bills caused a flurry of excitement. The Lincoln Park bill, passed first, named Ezra McCagg to its first Commission and he was immediately elected president. On March 1st he wrote Olmsted in New York on behalf of the board, asking him to prepare a design for laying out and improving Lincoln Park. Dr. Rauch wrote that he was preparing the way to have Olmsted make a study of all the Chicago parks. Olmsted would have liked the job of designing a whole system of parks and boulevards. Some years later he did it in Boston, creating a famous "Emerald Necklace" for the city. But in Chicago he did not realize that materialize because there was no authority governing all the parks; the Commissions were independent set up by state legislation and independent of each other. Each handled its planning differently.

The commission which Olmsted and Vaux did get was the biggest of them all. Vaux, in Chicago on Riverside business in October 1869, was asked to meet with the South Park Commissioners, one of whom was Paul Cornell. They were still acquiring property for the main park, they told him, and did not expect him to start work on that portion immediately. But they wanted surveys, working plans and specifications for two boulevards or parkways, then called Drexel and Kankakee Avenues, which would link the South Park with the city to the north. On October 9 Vaux proposed to do the job for $4,000, and after some hesitation, the South Park Commissioners agreed. Six months later, on April 7, 1870, they hired Olmsted and Vaux to design the South Park itself. Their fee would be $15 an acre, with $2,500 initially and the rest on receipt of the plan. Within the month Olmsted and Vaux resigned from Riverside and turned their attention to Chicago and the South Park.

It was not easy to make a thing of beauty on the South Park site. The Lower Division, later to be Jackson Park, was swampy sand dunes, and the Upper Division, subsequently Washington Park, was flat prairie. Because of the lake winds and a water table very close to the surface, no trees grew to any impressive height. Olmsted and Vaux wrote drily, "The fact should be recognized that none of the sites and no part of any one of the sites which have been reserved for parks at Chicago would generally elsewhere be recognized as well adapted to the purpose."

But somehow in Chicago a disadvantage became a challenge. The undertaking was bold and Olmsted and Vaux were buoyed by the sense that a great city was rising "upon ground plans now forming and foundations now laying." They thought it would be a city with a metropolitan character and influence, because it had not only commercial advantages but also scientific, artistic and social attractions. And a park would contribute to these.

And so it was that the genius of Frederick Law Olmsted, the man who "painted with nature" as D.H. Burnham referred to him, began his work in Chicago. The full story of Olmsted and Vaux's work...not only in the South Parks of Jackson and Washington, but in planning the total environment of the 1893 World's Fair and the work of the Olmsted Brothers in their 1904 designs for Mark White Square and Marquette Park, Armour Square and Hamilton Park will be the topic of further investigation. The story of the Olmsted legacy goes well into the twentieth century and goes well beyond the number of parks the family planned.

At a time of its formative growth Frederick Law Olmsted Senior provided the city with his vision, and what he saw still applies today. He showed the city the potential for pleasure in its lake, and the popularity of providing rich and varied activities for people to enjoy together in the parks. He thought in terms of the whole metropolitan area, proposing parkways to make the suburbs and parks accessible to all. After a hundred years of industrialization, Chicagoans should look at Olmsted's plans for their city and demand as much today.

These excerpts are taken from Victoria Post Ranney's publication "Olmsted in Chicago" with permission of the author. Copies of it may be purchased from:

The Friends of the Parks
53 West Jackson, Suite 848
Chicago, Illinois 60604
Charge...$3.00 plus tax and postage.
RIVERSIDE, ILLINOIS, AN OLMSTED-VAUX PLANNED COMMUNITY, IS TESTAMENT TO THEIR GENIUS

Autumn Vista of Town Center
RIVERSIDE Well Over 100--and Still Going Strong

What National Landmark site is located approximately eleven miles southwest of Chicago in the sprawling midwest countryside? That's no mystery! It's one of our country's first planned suburban communities designed by our country's first and foremost landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted. It's the picturesque village of Riverside, Illinois. As promised in a previous NAOP Newsletter, this article is going to take an in-depth look at the "village in a park," as Olmsted referred to it, the "Ideal Community." We will look at the original Olmsted principles of urban design from which its rich heritage grew and also what that heritage means to its residents today.

How does a landmark community maintain its aesthetic-ally romantic atmosphere and yet accommodate the "progress" and changes which ensue with the 20th-century utilitarian philosophy of simplicity and mode of rapid living? How could Mr. Olmsted have foreseen the jet age, traffic congestion and the automobile careening down his narrow village roadways? How could he have foreseen the change from passive to active recreational use within his parks? And how could he have known about the terrible blight which would consume huge numbers of elms bordering his beautiful parkways? These and other, such questions bring the relevancy of the idea stated by Dr. Charles McLaughlin, Co-chairman of the National Association for Olmsted Parks, and author of the article, "Frederick Law Olmsted's Parks: Antiquities or Urban Necessities?" into a new focus which can be explored by tracing the development of Riverside, Illinois from its conception in 1868, through its years of growth, and analyzing its mature state today. We think the results of our investigation will be pleasantly positive.

To begin at the beginning, 1868, Riverside was the development of an enterprising group of eastern businessmen led by their President, Emory E. Childs, who formed the Riverside Land Improvement Company and purchased a 1600-acre tract of land along the shores of the Des Plaines River. Although consisting of several separate parcels of property, it was basically bought from Mr. David Gage, horsebreeder. In an 1874 publication, which reviewed the statutes of Riverside to date, it was stated:

"...the eye of the far-seeing speculator alighted upon the spot, and the inevitable Company having been organized, the car of progress was speedily set in motion. The locality, in its natural condition, was beautiful; and the opportunity presented for the artist to elaborate upon, and improve the work of nature, was unquestionable. The Company had wealthy and responsible men upon its directorate, whose spirits were speedily aglow with the vision of the bright things before them if they could ever realize their dream of planting on the banks of the Des Plaines the model suburb of America."

Their choice for the "artist" to create and implement this design was obvious. They chose the man who had designed Central Park in New York, only 10 years earlier, Frederick Law Olmsted. Olmsted and his partner, Calvert Vaux, had long been interested in the development of such a model community, and had been influenced by the work of A.J. Downing and Llewelyn Park. Here was their chance to create what no one had to date successfully done, of laying out of the suburb that should practically be a public park for the comfort of private residents. It would be a complete community with shops, paved streets, a church, waterworks and sewerage and 700 acres of common areas provided solely for the "social intercourse" and recreation of its citizens. Though it seemed like a utopian idea, it worked!

Everything likely to give the place the appearance of a resident park was done. The opportunities offered by the curving course of the Des Plaines were not neglected and thus the roads in Riverside adopted its curvilinear configuration. The soft-shouldered roads with cobblestone gutters were set 3 feet below the grade level of the common areas and the illusion of one continuous, sweeping meadow of parkland was created—two long commons divide the main thoroughfares and the confluence of the streets provides forty triangular parks that range in area from several hundred square feet to several acres.

An excerpt taken from Olmsted and Vaux's detailed plans for developing their dream gives one an image of what they had in mind:

"Public walks will be laid on the river bank; there will be numerous public ball and croquet fields... The river affords opportunities for boats and several bridges, balconies and pavilions will give spectators advantages for observing regattas and other aquatic sports."

All the roads were lined with trees to make the area a true park. Trees indigenous to the area were, however, not enough to satisfy Olmsted. He used some of the funds allotted to him to buy a large variety of the most beautiful trees that he could find. To supplement these, he also purchased and planted a large number and variety of flowering shrubs. Not only was Riverside to be a park, but a "natural" garden designed to rival Birkenhead's "forced" beauty.

Practically, the plans for Riverside forbade the construction or development of any form of industry. To build those buildings which Olmsted had incorporated in his original plans the Company hired the firm of Schermerhorn, Bogart and Jenney as their architects and engineers. W.L.B. Jenney was one of Chicago's most distinguished architects and is credited as being the designer of the first modern skyscraper, the Home Insurance Building. Jenney's firm went on to construct some of the permanent structures within the village, the water tower, train station and many of the domestic dwellings which comprised forty or so of the original homes. Frederick C. Withers, a former associate of Vaux's, was chosen to design the central commercial block, known as the Green Block, and the Community Church.

All of this activity, from planning to completion took less than two years, and in 1871, the project stood ready, awaiting the critiques of the designers of the world. The earliest comments on the new theories of Olmsted and Vaux as presented in Riverside were those of Charles Nordhoff of the New York Evening Post. He wrote in 1871:

"I had heard of Riverside as one of the curiosities of the west, and now I have seen it and, loving the country, wish sincerely that Chicago were New York, or that Riverside Improvement Corporation had favored our vicinity with their enterprise. . . . This is no job, no great "public work"; there is no politics in it. It is a commercial adventure, conceived in a vivid spirit and admirably carried out."

And the praise for Riverside's plan and beauty has continued through the years. A 1963 issue of Landscape Magazine stated that:
"Riverside exemplifies the virtues of the 19th century upper middle-class suburb. It has a strong and compact core, a fascinating street pattern, and an ample allowance of light, air, and greenery for everyone. Its landscaping...is unique."

The uniqueness of the village of Riverside remains today. Close observation will show that the major concepts of Olmsted and Vaux have been preserved and maintained. The maze of gaslit curvilinear roads still dismays the visitor much to the amusement of the residents. The parks are still protected as common land for the use of all the residents and gracious, rambling homes still stand on the ample lots.

However, there are problems of modernization. Some elements which contribute to the spirit of Riverside seem to be suffering due to the advances of society. For example, the trees which form the most basic element of the park plan have suffered tremendous losses from Dutch Elm and Black Oak diseases. It is the village policy to remove the diseased trees and to replace them, thus maintaining the ratio of trees to space. A citizen-initiated project, POET, Protect Our Elm Trees, was begun in 1973 to inoculate the elms with a new chemical in hopes of saving these vestiges of the past. But the costs of such programs have soared and keeping the village forested is an ongoing and expensive task.

Roads and the traffic on them are another area of concern. Long, uninterrupted roadways had become a shortcut for transient traffic through the village and after much debate the installation of frequent stop signs and the closing of some access roads was found necessary to re-establish some of the village's former tranquility. The roads are old and in some cases need repaving. Should modern gutters and black top replace the cobblestones and concrete? Some residents think not. Bus lines threaten periodically to challenge Riverside's landmark status and straighten out or "modernize" a thoroughfare through the village, not meant for use by large carriers or Greyhound buses. The gaslights which illuminate the village were recently in danger of being turned off. Quixotic from citizen and village groups have successfully thwarted such actions.

The central business district of Riverside, once its center of commerce and site of the 125-room Riverside Hotel, has suffered the fate of many community shopping districts when a huge shopping center is constructed just outside of its village limits. Patrons of the local shops seek a wider variety of goods and more parking spaces.

But the citizens of Riverside or the Village Board taken any of these problems lying down, NOI! Demonstrating the same civic pride of the original families who settled Riverside, they have met the challenge of modernity and seem to have reached a workable compromise with it. Not only have they improved the traffic situation by the installation of stop signs, but groups such as the Frederick Law Olmsted Society, founded in 1968, now raise funds annually through tours, lectures and private membership donations to aid the strapped Forestry Commission with the purchase of trees and advise on the selection of the varieties to be planted in the common areas. They also sponsor an annual scholarship to a resident landscape student who might prove to be a budding FLO.

There is an active Riverside Historic Commission which monitors and consults on the historic accuracy of any contemplated changes in Riverside's buildings or parks. The most recent structural renovation in Riverside was the train station. It was offered to the village by the Burlington Northern Line and the village ingeniously conceived of a way to save it from demolition. Lyons Savings and Loan assumed the maintenance of the building in return for an adaptive use of the baggage area which was converted into several attrac-tive walk-up teller stations. Still open to the public as a train station, it now has a special bonus of being used frequently as the gathering place for many community functions. In fact, in June of 1981 the NAOP Steering Committee visiting the Chicago area was hosted to a luncheon at the site.

And that's not all. In response to the onslaught of the new nearby shopping mall a collaboration of citizens, drawing persons from the Village Board, the Frederick Law Olmsted Society, the Historic Commission, the Chamber of Commerce and citizens at large, formed the Central Business District (CBD) Committee. Its purpose was to investigate just how best to revitalize Riverside's downtown area physically and psychologically. After two years of weekly meetings, street-scene analysis and shopper surveys, they were awarded a Cook County grant and a grant from the Department of Conservation of Illinois to develop their CBD Improvement Plan. Their goal: to maintain the small-town environment—but to provide the amenities—parking, attractive shops, a variety of wares and to avoid the sameness look of many villages which have adopted the "colonial America" motif—not so different from Olmsted and Vaux's initial dream after all.

Riverside and its citizens prove the words of D.H. Burnham (the designer of Chicago's magnificent lakefront plan of 1909) to be true:

"...a noble logical design once recorded will never die, but long after we are gone will be a living thing, asserting itself with ever growing insistency."

Riverside is alive, well and strong. Although there have been many opportunities for the ideas of Frederick Law Olmsted to go by the wayside, they haven't. Olmsted warned over 100 years ago against building cities "little by little and chiefly to suit the view of landowners, acting only individually and thinking only of how and what they do is to affect the value in the next week or the next year of the few lots that each may hold at a time." But that, of course, is exactly what most communities did and are still doing, but not Riverside. Its prognosis for continued health and growth is excellent and its heritage is firmly protected for future generations to admire.

Sandra L. Higgins
1982 NAOP Conference Coordinator

And Now a Look Back

The following material is reprinted with permission from historical research done on the village of Riverside.

A million years ago the massive mile-thick glaciers of the Ice Age were rearranging the topography of this continent. When they finally receded for the last time, carving out their gift of the Great Lakes for us, a high ridge remained around Lake Michigan. But Nature fortunately formed a break or channel in this ridge beginning in our area of what is now Riverside and Lyons, and the DesPlaines River flowed through it during seasons of high water, joining the Chicago River on its way to Lake Michigan. When the water was low, a portage for a short distance was necessary; and the early French explorers referred to the entire channel as "Le Portage".

The importance of the portage was incalculable. Because it was by far the easiest and best route through the ridge, it made overland travel and navigation between east and west possible. Numerous wars were fought between the French and English and the Indians and white settlers for control of the Portage, for whoever controlled it dominated the thriving fur trade of the great Northwest Territory, all of which was tunneled through this channel.
The Indians knew a good thing when they saw it, even as you and I. Here, near the entrance to the Portage, was a grove of trees offering shelter, game and cool shade. Here also was a navigable river, sparkling clean and full of fish. No wonder they chose this best of all possible places to live! Scottswood Common and Indian Gardens were large campsites and burial grounds for the Potawatomi, Chippewa and Ottawa tribes, and from time to time artifacts and graves are still uncovered, much to the delight of Boy Scouts.

THE OVERLAND TRAIL

The years passed. Fort Dearborn, built in 1804 to guard the eastern entrance to the Portage, prospered mightily and grew into the City of Chicago. The muddy, swampy Portage had long since proved inadequate to accommodate the increase in traffic, and an overland trail had been cut parallel to it through the prairie wilderness. This road, if it could be called a road, was a vital link in the stage coach route between Chicago and St. Louis and was regarded with horror by the early chroniclers of the midwest.

The brothers Laughton (spelling later changed to "Lawton") built a tavern about 1830 at what is now the corner of Millbridge and Barrypoint Roads in Riverside. Every stagecoach making the Chicago to St. Louis run stopped there, not only for fresh horses but for broad-wheeled coaches if the stage was traveling eastward, so treacherous was the combination of poor drainage and rich Illinois topsoil. Listen to a visitor from England in 1840 as he colorfully tells his story:

"...at a creeping pace we left this last stage, the horses walking slowly all the way...with haltings at every pit and slough to survey the road before crossing it, and with wheels scarcely ever less than six inches and often a foot deep in mud and water. Altogether, this last night was by far the most disagreeable ever spent in journeying through the United States. We had all the evils of bad roads, thick darkness, suffocating heat, a crowded stage, disagreeable companions...venomous mosquitoes, a continual apprehension of being upset in the mire, and then left to grope our way to the nearest house for shelter..."

An attempt was made to remedy this deplorable road in 1842, elevating it two and a half feet over its natural level and five feet above the ditches on each side. Edwin Gage in "Reminiscences of Early Chicago" writes vividly of this "improved" road:

"The clay of which it was composed appeared to have a grudge against every living thing, horse, ox or man, and threw its tenuous tentacles around all things, to draw them down to its infernal level."

Surely enough to give one the nervous feebles...yes, our present day Ogden Avenue had a rough time getting off the ground!

THE PLANK ROAD

About 1850 a revolutionary new idea in road construction drifted down from Canada. Why not use wooden planks to solve the problem of road construction for all time? Accordingly, two rows of wooden girders, some as small as 2 x 4 inches, were imbedded in the earth and planks were laid crosswise on them. For a few short months this engineering marvel, majestically referred to as the Southwest Plank Road, was hailed as an outstanding success. But, incredibly, no one thought to nail the planks to the girders, and when the rains came, many of them floated away! Other ills beset this marvel in the form of decay, slipping and sliding, warping, and plain everyday filching. And when a storm threatened, farmers along the thoroughfare often stacked the planks under trees to help keep them dry, replacing them when the waters subsided. About 1860 the failure of the whole idea was finally acknowledged, and the plank road was abandoned in this area.

THE FIRST PLANNED COMMUNITY

But road or no road, the splendid grove of trees still stood and the river reflected the glory of the changing seasons, eventually capturing the imagination of a group of foresighted men with the money to make their dreams come true. An article in the Western Home Journal, Chicago, March 1870, reads:

"Five years ago Chicago differed from most other cities in not having any suburbs. But if one will now take a look through a few of the hundreds of real estate brokers' offices of this city and view the numerous maps and elegantly drawn plans of town sites which are there exhibited...he will likely be led to the conclusion that Chicago's suburbs are greater than the city itself. But upon careful inspection of these town he will find that many of them exist only on paper, and though nice baits for greenhorns to bite at, there is a sharp hook concealed within, which will wound whoever ventures to taste the clainty morsel."

Promises are held out of great public improvements about to be made in all these places...but the well-informed know that these things generally have to be done by the people after they have become actual residents...that all such things come slowly, and at last have to be forced through by a few who generally pay more than their share of the expenses.

But though this must inevitably be the experience of those who settle in many of the paper towns about Chicago, it will not be so with all. There are some towns growing up which we think will realize the expectations of purchasers. One of the most conspicuous among these is

RIVERSIDE

The DesPlaines River forms a perpetual border to the village of Riverside

A company of wide-awake capitalists have taken it in hand and secured the services of the eminent landscape gardeners and architects, Messieurs Olmsted, Vaux and Company, of New York Central Park fame; in accordance with whose plans the company have laid out a village plan in which the highest type of known artistic design consorts with great natural beauty to render Riverside a place whose fame is destined to be country-wide."

And Riverside still stands, a century later, as a living tribute to the genius of Frederick Law Olmsted, who remains unchallenged as the greatest landscape architect America has ever known.

A tour of Riverside will be a feature of the National Assn. for Olmsted Parks Annual Conference June 3-6, 1982. Please plan to come aboard — on the town.
forming other rapidly growing American cities throughout the nation. And finally, it is appropriate to Chicago's nearby town of Riverside where Olmsted's revolutionary residential plan forecast the rapid postwar development of suburbs that changed the urban landscape in the second half of the 20th century so extensively.

Chicago's lakefront parks and beaches have preserved nearly all of the 26-mile shoreline for public use. Olmsted's designs for Jackson Park, Washington Park and Sherman Park extended park planning inland by creating a system of parks and boulevards that encircle the central city and give definition to the neighborhoods which grew around them.

The host of this year's conference, Friends of the Parks, is a Chicago organization that has been working throughout the city to improve its park system, encourage new and varied park uses, develop programs for greater community participation in park operations and foster an understanding and respect for the heritage entrusted to Chicago by earlier generations. An important goal of the Friends is a collaboration of park administrators, neighborhood activists, urban planners, park preservationists and landscape architects in the discussion and application of Olmsted traditions to today's park challenge, a collaboration not unlike that which led to the tremendous success begun by Olmsted in 1893.

Chicago is in the midst of plans to host the 1992 World's Fair. Among the highlights of the conference will be the presentation of proposals under consideration and review of the contributions of Olmsted to shaping the 1893 Fair and the restoration of Jackson Park following its close. Also to be highlighted is the community of Riverside, Illinois. Riverside has maintained an acute public awareness through citizen participation in Olmsted residential planning traditions which is community-wide. Riverside will welcome the conferees to visit the village and absorb its surroundings in a full afternoon tour on Saturday, June 5th.

Another aspect of the Olmsted tradition to be visited will be the design of the University of Chicago campus and several estates landscaped by FLO in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. These are a relatively unknown part of Olmsted's work.

In order to explore fully the wide range of areas affected by the Olmsted legacy in the midwest, the conference schedule this year has been expanded to four days. Many of the events will be held at the recently renovated, 300-room Midland Hotel, which will act as our conference headquarters. Rooms will be available to registrants at a very special conference rate of $32.00 single occupancy and $38.00 double occupancy. The hotel will provide space for pre-conference meetings on Wednesday, June 2nd, for those groups who find that the annual conference offers an important opportunity to meet to discuss their particular interests.

The Chicago Olmsted Conference Committee is working diligently with our conference coordinator, Sandra Higgins, to continue the high standards set at the 1981 Conference. Once again, to kick off the scheduled events, a pre-conference free public lecture is set for Wednesday evening. On Thursday the conference plenary session will open with a lecture on Frederick Law Olmsted and the Midwest landscape. Afternoon tours to Jackson, Washington and Sherman Parks, Drexel and King Boulevards, the lakefront site of the 1992 World’s Fair and Burnham’s Grant Park will enhance the content of the lectures. That evening, the Chicago Historical Society, will be the scene of a reception. All day Friday and Saturday morning will be devoted to seminars, lectures and workshops at the Midland Hotel. On Saturday afternoon, we will board a train to Riverside for a tour and reception. On Sunday, a trip to four Olmsted-designed estates in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin and the grounds of the Yerkes Observatory is scheduled.

These are only some of the highlights of what's in store. As chairman of the Olmsted Conference Committee, I am looking forward to welcoming you personally to the Third Annual Conference of the National Association for Olmsted Parks. It is a goal of the Committee to make this conference relevant to your interests and we invite your suggestions for topics and participants in the workshops and seminars. Most of all, your participation, the exchange of ideas, the nurturing of the network of people concerned with urban parks will be the significant events of the conference. Please join us in June to make it a real success!

Martin Reinhart, Chairman
1982 Olmsted Conference Committee
NATIONAL NEWS OF OLMS TED PARKS

New York... William Alex, President of the Frederick Law Olmsted Association, announces the publication of a catalog-index of some 1,400 original Central Park drawings, a 189-page document identifying the title, date, architect, subject, size, medium and other interesting features of the unique collection of plans, drawings, renderings and sketches now housed at the Avery Library at Columbia University. The conservation and cataloguing of these documents, stored in a neglected condition in Sara Delano Roosevelt Park until they were discovered in 1973, were begun by the Olmsted Association in 1979 and partly funded by the New York State Council on the Arts. All but a few of the drawings have now been conserved, and many have found immediate practical application, helping the stone mason at work at the Belvedere to replicate lost portions of the parapet, or, as the first entry does, to confirm that FLO himself laid out the design for Central Park north of 85th Street to 110th. The catalogue is available from the FLO Association for $10.00 plus 50c postage.

Boston... Richard Heath, President of the Franklin Park Coalition, reports that this group is now taking the lead in proposing park projects. Through an Action for Boston Community Development Grant, eighteen teenagers, mostly from minority areas, have been put to work cleaning, weeding and pruning several heavily used areas of the park, coming back at regular intervals to keep the areas clean. A $400,000 HCGR grant was used to fund a Franklin Park Master Plan (See Volume I, Number 2, NAOP Newsletter) which resulted in several improvements to park steps, entrances and walkways, and helped control motor vehicles which are a major source of damage to the park. The Coalition is actively fund raising and has received some $6,000 for its educational publications, primarily from corporations which had no history of giving for park purposes, an encouraging sign. In addition, Richard has begun to catalogue the Franklin Park drawings in the possession of the Parks Department and those at Fairl sted. These drawings are vital to the future restoration of Franklin Park and to its wise use by the community and city as a whole.

Seattle... Donald Harris, Director of Development for the Department of Parks and Recreation, has held a kick-off meeting, when some 150 came to hear about the extensive Olmsted influence in that city, where more than thirty parks were designed by FLO, Jr. and John C. Olmsted. Allport's speech was extensively covered in the press and on radio and served to increase awareness of the Olmsted legacy in Seattle. "A whole series of events has resulted from this visit," he reported. One, a Gardener-in-the-Park program, will focus on the needs of a specific area; another will help to fund the conservation of the Seattle drawings at Fairlsted. A major capital program is also being developed for Seattle's parks, of which the Olmsted parks will be a major beneficiary.

Riverside, IL... Edward Straka, of the Riverside Historical Commission, has been meeting weekly with the Conference Steering Committee to plan Riverside's participation in the 1982 conference. The re-forestation of the Long Common has begun, based on a master's thesis prepared by a graduate student at the University of Michigan, and a Forestry and Historic Commission Committee has been formed to monitor the 40% of Riverside which is in public land and to promote a greater understanding of the Olmstedian concepts for this Village-in-a-Park, as Olmsted termed it. A Federal-state grant has been received to study the redevelopment of the downtown business district which contains many historic buildings, including an interesting arcade by Frederick Clark Withers, which is expected to be restored in due course.

Louisville... Eleanor Bingham Miller, director of the Olmsted Festival in Louisville, has targeted June, 1982 for completion of a 30-minute, multi-projector slide presentation on Olmsted in Louisville, where, in his later years, he was responsible for Cherokee, Iroquois and Shawnee Parks, as well as for Boone Square, the restoration of which is another goal of the Festival. A third is the Municipal Museum of Art show, on the "Art of The Olmsted Landscape" which will be coupled with a locally produced supplement emphasizing specific work in that area. Plans for Boone Square were prepared by Artemas Richardson, the last member of the Olmsted firm, in cooperation with Campbell and Miller, a local firm of landscape architects. Mrs. Miller suggests there is a ready-made base of NAOPs' community activities, through such organizations as Trees, Inc., which is providing the plant material for Boone Square, and other civic organizations which could be brought together around a visit from the NAOP Steering Committee. A $20,000 grant has been secured from the Kentucky Humanities Council to help fund the slide presentation, which is already booked on state-wide educational TV and could be shown more widely if there is sufficient interest in it.

New Haven... Howard Weaver, Yale University Media Design Studio, has produced the first draft of its script for a film documentary on Frederick Law Olmsted, tentatively entitled "Olmsted's America." This script will undergo considerable revision as a result of comments from many sources, and from the possibility that Jason Robards will agree to do the narration for it. While full funding is still uncertain, NAOP hopes this major undertaking will be ready for the 1983 NAOP world conference scheduled for New York City.

Droit... Marilyn Tschow, Past-President of the Friends of Belle Isle, spends much of her energy reminding the city of its obligation to its only Olmsted park, Belle Isle, unfortunately beset by numerous intrusions which detract from an appreciation of its land and water features. A special effort is being made to interest the Park Commissioner in the 1982 national conference, in the hope that by meeting some of his fellow custodians of Olmsted parks he might become more concerned with the management of Belle Isle.

Washington, D.C.... Charles C. McLaughlin, Editor-in-Chief of The Olmsted Papers, congratulates Charles E. Beveridge on his editorialship of Volume II, Slavery and the South, recently published by The Johns Hopkins University Press and favorably reviewed by David Donald in The New York Times, and expresses his satisfaction with the scheduled publication of Volume III, or Creating Central Park, due out late in 1982, work on which has essentially been finished. Volume IV will deal with Olmsted's years with the U.S. Sanitary Commission, when he learned to add sanitation and similar concerns to his social and aesthetic ideas, an important part of his Boston plans, among others. Volume V, The California Years, is making progress and will be followed by the Reports volume, where some of Olmsted's park reports will be published in full for the first time. Dr. McLaughlin notes that a group of friends of the Olmsted Papers has organized and received tax exempt status in Berkeley, and they are hard at work to assure sufficient funding for the ten-year publishing project. His greatest need now, he felt, was for word-processing capability, which would help to expedite the publication of future volumes.
Buffalo...Joan K. Bozer, NAOP Trustee and member of the Delaware Park Steering Committee, found herself in the middle of a major community flap over the planned utilization of cement rip rap as part of the Delaware Park Lake Restoration Project. (The park, which is a part of the Buffalo Olmsted Park and Parkway System, was recently nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.) Community support for a natural look for the lake shore resulted from extensive media attention, and the revised plans are an improvement over the original proposals.

A repository for historic park photographs, cards, plans and the like is being considered and an Olmsted on the Niagara Frontier Day has been held to raise public consciousness of the Olmsted legacy.

Joan noted that 1982 was the sesquicentennial of the founding of Buffalo, and proposed that NAOP should make a fitting anniversary gift to the City of Buffalo. The Steering Committee has since decided this should be in the form of a brochure on “Olmsted in Buffalo,” one which would receive wide school and public distribution.

Hartford...Sanford Parisky, Vice President of the Bushnell Park Foundation, traces his growing involvement with NAOP to the February visit of the Steering Committee to Hartford, Olmsted’s birth and final resting place. While not actually an Olmsted-designed park...Goodwin, Pope and Riverside are, however...Horace Bushnell, for whom it was named, was a close friend and neighbor of the Olmsteds in Hartford, and undoubtedly influenced the young Frederick’s view of nature and open space. Jacob Weidenmann, who did design the park, subsequently associated with the Olmsted firm.

“Bushnell Park’s restoration may just be an idea whose time has come,” Sandy says. A grant from a local insurance company paid for an overall restoration plan prepared by the firm of Quinnell-Rothschild, which divided the park’s needs into many “bite-sized” fundable projects, ranging from $1,000 to almost $1 million for the Memorial Arch, a unique entrance to the park.

Hartford’s 350th Anniversary in 1986 has been established as completion date and things are starting to happen. A huge, intruding flood-control berm has been removed by the U.S. Corps of Engineers at the Department of Parks’ request; the Horace Wells statue has had its graffiti removed by the local Dental Society, the pond has been filled with water to determine where the leaks are and how they can be repaired; a press walk with price tags attached to various restoration items drew fifty persons on a rainy day; a Bottle Cap Saturday collected many pounds of these little nuisances and permitted grass to grow in their stead; and more. The people of Hartford are discovering that Bushnell Park is worth fighting for, as “the Oldest Newspaper in Continuous Publication in America,” as The Hartford Courant describes itself, recently pointed out.

New York...Jean McClinstock, environmental historian, is in the process of documenting the natural environment of New York City, the photographs of which are being turned into attractive park posters. This work, being done on behalf of her organization the Earth Environmental Center, led to the production of several school-level slide presentations, film strips and the guides to Central and Riverside Parks which are also available without charge. Jean has also recently received a 6-month grant to study the 20th-century dilemma of Olmsted’s parks. With it she plans to compare old and new theories of recreation, park planning and use and determine whether there is any correlation between these theories and elements of a park which no longer functions properly. Much of this work, as it relates to Central and Prospect Parks, will be incorporated into the New York City Inventory. Finally, she has begun to teach a course at the Parsons School of Design which explores the use of 19th-century theories to solve 20th-century problems. “We must make sure that the results of our work find their way into the educational system,” she concludes.

Concord, Massachusetts...“Perceptions of History,” a colloquium to examine the present state of historical interpretation, will be held in Concord, Massachusetts on March 31, April 1 and 2, 1982. Concentrating on practical, every-day problems as well as philosophical issues, the colloquium will include an exploration of the myths of history and their effect on public perceptions of historic areas. Visits with dialogue discussions to a choice of neighboring historic sites along with workshops in specific areas of concern will also be included.

Sponsors for the colloquium are Bay State Historical League, Massachusetts Historical Commission, National Association for Olmsted Parks, National Park Service, Amer. Trust for Historic Preservation, New England Museum Association, and Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities. For program and registration details write to History Colloquium, National Park Service, North Atlantic Region, 15 State Street, Boston, MA 02109.

Inventory of Olmsted Parks Begun in New York State

With the exception of Massachusetts, no state can claim a larger share of the Olmstedian legacy than New York, rich in parks planned by Frederick Law Olmsted, Senior, Calvert Vaux and others, as well as in a second generation of parks, such as Fort Tryon, planned by the Olmsted Brothers, FLO, Jr. and John C. Olmsted, in the early 1930s and donated to the City of New York by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. in 1935. Hardly a major city, from Niagara Falls to Newburgh, is without its legacy of Olmstedian design, and New York City itself has almost its own complete collection of park plans, expressing early, many of the ideas and techniques employed by the Olmsted firm in later years.

Now, thanks largely to a grant from the New York State Council on the Arts, the National Association for Olmsted Parks is able to visit and work with citizen leaders, park administrators, landscape design schools and students to strengthen or create community organizations for park preservation in at least four cities or towns in New York State, exclusive of New York City, where the level of concern for park protection and restoration is already high. Initial visits by NAOP Executive Director Alexander Allport have been made to Buffalo and Niagara Falls, also known as the Niagara Frontier or Reservation, Rochester, Utica, Newburgh, Watertown and Albany, where Olmsted worked, and trips are planned shortly to Glen Falls, Oyster Bay, Rye and West Point. Only Syracuse, among the major cities in the state lacks any legacy of such public design, though some work was done for the University there. In addition NAOP representatives, such as Joan Bozer in Buffalo and Charles Beveridge, Editor of the Olmsted Papers, are involved. Dr. Beveridge spoke recently in Rochester, representing NAOP during his visit.

The major focus of the effort is to create several self-sustaining community groups which will affiliate with NAOP and participate in its program nationally while working for park preservation locally. The issue has already been joined in Buffalo, where further work in Delaware Park seems intent on undoing the remaining vestiges of Olmsted’s design, and in Niagara Falls, where a new master plan has been prepared.
RECLAIMING A CENTRAL PARK LANDMARK WITH A LOT OF HELP FROM ITS FRIENDS

The decision to return Calvert Vaux's Dairy to its former architectural character began with the preparation in 1973 by Joseph Bresnan, Director of Historic Parks, and Adrienne Bresnan, Assistant Director of Capital Projects, of a preliminary plan for Central Park's restoration. The Vincent Astor Foundation provided funds for the necessary plans to be prepared by James Lamantia, Architect. Funds to restore the entire building were originally appropriated in the City's capital budget; however, they were rescinded during the 1975 fiscal crisis. But the determination to reclaim the deteriorated building remained.

Alexander Allport, then Director of the Central Park Community Fund, working with David W. Mitchell, chairman of Avon Products, Inc., succeeded in raising $200,000 to accomplish Phase 1: the interior renovation. Donations including $100,000 from Revlon, Inc. and additional funds from Sheldon Solow and the Solow Foundation, Mobil, The Hearst Foundation, Central Savings Bank, Uris Brothers Foundation, Avon Products, Inc., and the E.B. Osborn Charitable Trust.

Mr. Allport pursued the project to its completion, working with Parks Commissioner Gordon J. Davis and Central Park Administrator Elizabeth Barlow as well as other members of the Parks Department who were responsible for approving the design and reconstruction plans and supervising the building's conversion from a storage depot into a public hall, for concerts, lectures, exhibitions and park information.

The reclamation of the Dairy as a landmark structure in Central Park was accomplished with the advice and assistance of historic preservationists, architects and architectural historians. William Alex, Director of the Frederick Law Olmsted Association, was a restoration consultant to the New York City Landmarks Commission, and Henry Hope Reed, Curator of Central Park, and Robert Makla, head of the Friends of Central Park, also endorsed the project.

Elizabeth Barlow, Central Park Administrator

The above item is reprinted in its entirety with permission of the author from “The Dairy in Central Park Restoration Notes,” published by the Central Park Conservancy on occasion of the Dairy’s reopening in October 1981. Built in 1870 and restored in 1979-81, the Dairy is now an information and education center, a base for the Urban Park Rangers and the starting point of numerous tours of Central Park.

Drawing by William Rogan
"SLAVERY AND THE SOUTH," PUBLISHED

The second volume of the Olmsted Papers, *Slavery and the South: 1852-1857*, is published and has received favorable critical response. David Donald, prominent historian of the antebellum period, praised the volume in his review in *The New York Times* Book Review of June 28 for its "rich and thoughtful introduction and exceptionally rich annotation," and described it as "an indispensable work for any serious student of the Old South."

Volume III of the Olmsted Papers, *Creating Central Park: 1857-1861*, is now being copy-edited and will be published in the fall of 1982. It will publish, for the first time since 1858, the original "Greensward" competition report. Accompanying the report will be the original plan and the ten "before and after" views that Olmsted and Vaux submitted with their plan. The volume will supplement this material with Olmsted's description of the park of 1859 and a map showing the plan of the park as revised during 1858 and 1859.

Other documents will deal with Olmsted's early experiences as superintendent, his supervision of construction as Architect-in-Chief, his relations with the politically minded park commissioners, and his attempts to create an efficient force of park keepers who would protect visitors to the park and instruct them in its proper use. Also included will be Olmsted's long and entertaining letter of August, 1860 outlining the principles that should govern the laying out of streets on Manhattan above 155th St. The last chapter will consist of the article entitled "Park" that he wrote for the *New American Cyclopaedia* - the first article on the subject in an American reference work.

Volumes I & II are available directly through the National Association for Olmsted Parks, and Volume III will also be published in paperback and distributed through NAOP.

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**FRIENDS OF THE OLMSTED PAPERS FORMED TO HELP FUND FUTURE VOLUMES**

The drying up of funds from the National Endowments for the Arts and Humanities has imperiled the future publication of the Frederick Law Olmsted Papers. This important documentary project now depends on us all.

The Friends of the F.L. Olmsted Papers, a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt group, was organized to assure the continued research and publication of the full 12 volumes. As you've read in previous issues of this newsletter, Volumes I and II have been published and greeted with acclaim by *The New York Times*, *The Smithsonian* and the *American Historical Review*. Ten more volumes remain to be funded, including Volume III which deals with the design and construction of Central Park.

Olmsted's philosophy on the relationship of parks, cities and the natural environment continues to inspire and educate designers and environmentalists today. His work and thought provide an important guide to the future.

“We want especially,” said Frederick Law Olmsted in defining the nature of parks, "the greatest possible contrast with the restraining and confining conditions of the town, those which compel us to walk circumspectly, watchfully, jealously, which compel us to look closely upon others without sympathy." City officials, professional planners and designers, volunteer park groups and environmentalists are relying on the publication of Olmsted's design reports and general writings to save or restore his parks, community designs and scenic reservations. Olmsted's eye-witness accounts and social commentary on his times will also serve as a valuable resource for historians and sociologists.

There are no ongoing grants. Broad public support is needed. Join in making sure the intellectual record of this extraordinary American humanist is accessible to everyone. BECOME A FRIEND! Contributions are very welcome.

**Friends of the F.L.Olmsted Papers**
Box 7292 Landscape Station
Berkeley, California 94707

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**NAOP Celebrates First Birthday, Joyful But Poor**

We were recently told by a prominent landscape editor that, when he heard of NAOP's founding he gave it two months to survive. Now he is a strong supporter of the movement. That was more than a year ago, and NAOP has survived and continues to expand rapidly in several directions, as this third issue of the national newsletter attests.

Getting here has not been easy, as the Trustees and members of the Steering Committee know, and adequate funding has not automatically followed successful and constructive programs. While the membership has grown to almost 1,000, some funding sources prefer "local" giving to support of a national effort. Unlike Central, Jackson or Franklin Parks, NAOP, with its diverse program and far-reaching interests, is more difficult to keep in focus.

In spite of these hurdles we have been able to gather support from Con Edison, the Joyce Mertz-Gilmore Foundation, the J.M. Kaplan Fund, Estee Lauder, Inc., the Henry & Lucy Moses Foundation, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, New York Community Trust, the George Olmsted Foundation, the Arthur Ross Foundation (our first foundation supporter), plus the New York State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts. In addition numerous individuals and institutions have given some support, one particularly generous person wishing to remain anonymous. Both Harvard and Yale are represented as Institutional Members, along such important Olmsted cities as New York, Chicago, Seattle and Rochester, to name a few. For this support we are most grateful, but we must all dedicate ourselves to doing even better in 1982.

Individual membership still lies at the heart of the Association, and we hope many will join in the coming months, taking advantage of the special double offer being made by NAOP and the Chicago Friends of the Parks. For only $25.00 you can join both organizations for a year and then receive a special discount to the forthcoming National Conference in June. Or, if you prefer, the $25.00, three-year membership option in NAOP is still available.

The coming year will be a critical one for the growth and further development of the National Association for Olmsted Parks. We all feel confident we will make it again, as we have the year just past, but it will require everyone pulling together to find the funds to make our hopes of park preservation a reality.

*The Editor*
THE CHALLENGE OF TODAY: PROVIDING RECREATION IN HISTORIC PARKS

One of the many challenges facing park and recreation planners in today's older cities is providing satisfactory recreational opportunities for current local populations in park settings that were designed and built more than seven decades ago.

Many of the parks that bear Frederick Law Olmsted's touch are located in—and often provide the sole recreational opportunity for—neighborhoods that are socially and economically distressed. Often, one of the more pressing needs in such areas is for recreational outlets for neighborhood youth. When faced with the possibility of an increasing number of idle young people, many of whom lack the supports of a strong family or neighborhood structure, park planners will often choose to sacrifice the aesthetic or historic features of a park to create more opportunities for active recreation.

Planners and landscape architects at the Chicago Park District came face to face with this dilemma last year while meeting with community residents on how to spend Federal Urban Park and Recreation Recovery funds to upgrade neighborhood parks.

Sherman Park is an Olmsted-designed park located on Chicago's South Side. Here, the majority of residents requested that the Park District use the $500,000 allotment to provide for additional athletic fields. True, the existing parks did not provide adequate ball-playing space for the neighborhood's residents, and after several meetings, the Park District was prepared to accede to the community's requests. However, a vocal minority insisted that the Park District use the funds for field space by simply realocating elements currently in the park—tennis courts, playground, etc.

An adequate solution to the problem does not seem to lie in choosing either historic design or active recreation. One is as necessary as the other for the well-being of individuals. Solutions must be found that adequately provide for the recreational needs of today's populations in settings that retain their historic beauty of design.

Gail M. Parrish
Project Planner

Editor's Note: Another aspect of the problem is conceptual: the almost automatic assumption by city managers that all new facilities must necessarily be located on existing park-lands. The creative use of Westway in New York or Freeway Park in Seattle provides new open space, while the proposed construction of a facility for mass gatherings in Battery Park City helps relieve pressure on such historic Olmsted areas as Central Park.

NAOP TRUSTEES ANNOUNCED

Following April's conference the organizing Trustees of NAOP met to elect an enlarged Board for the ensuing year and to decide on the officers. The following slate was voted at that time, all persons deeply involved with Olmsted scholarship or park preservation at the professional or citizen level. In addition, at its September meeting in New York, the Trustees added four members to the National Steering Committee. These are: Eleanor Bingham Miller from Louisville, KY, Edward S. Straka from Riverside, IL, Benjamin Fieman from Amherst, MA, and Cynthia Zaitzevsky from Boston.

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