NAOP TO CO-SPONSOR CONFERENCE IN NEW YORK

A two-day symposium on April 14 and 15, co-sponsored by the NAOP and the Museum of the City of New York, will explore the specific dimensions of Calvert Vaux’s career and the social, political, and cultural milieu in which he worked. Historians Albert Fein, Dana White, David Schuyler, David Hammock, David Scobey, Elizabeth Blackmar, and Roy Rosenzweig, and Bruce Kelly, Landscape Architect, will participate in panel discussions. Tours of Tompkins Square, Prospect Park, and Central Park will be conducted by Tupper Thomas, Charles Beveridge, Hope Cooke, Maryanne Cramer, and the Park Rangers.

ANNUAL NAOP MEETING TO BE HELD IN BALTIMORE IN CONJUNCTION WITH NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON OLMSITD PARKS AND LANDSCAPES

On May 5-7, the Friends of Maryland’s Olmsted Parks and Landscapes (FMOPL) with the NAOP as co-sponsor, will be hosting a national conference, “Reviving the Olmsted Vision, Bringing People and Greenspaces Together.” The NAOP annual meeting will be held on May 5.

The conference will focus on the history and philosophy of the Olmsteds who shaped urban design and planning for Maryland from 1876 until the 1940s. In 1904 the Olmsted Brothers proposed a grand park system for greater Baltimore that would link parkways and stream valleys, and public and private green spaces.

The conference will include six sessions on Saturday, May 6: “Discovery and Appreciation of Baltimore’s Olmsted Legacy,” “Revisiting Roland Park,” “Private Public Partnerships,” and “Linking Greenspaces.” There will be five tours on Sunday, May 7. A complete schedule and brochure is included in the centerpiece of this newsletter.

OLMSTED LEGACY IN MARYLAND AND THE FMOPL

Beginning in the 1870s, Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., and later his two sons, profoundly shaped the urban Maryland landscape. By 1940, the Olmsteds and their associates had designed or planned at least 140 sites in Maryland including Annapolis, Chevy Chase, Cumberland, Port Deposit, Westminster, and others in metropolitan Baltimore. The Friends of Maryland's Olmsted Parks and Landscapes (FMOPL) was formed in 1986 to promote and protect this great legacy.

Works by the Olmsteds include the full range of both public and private landscaped spaces, including among others: city squares, boulevards, parks, and other public grounds such as Fort McHenry. Private commissions by the Olmsteds included: Sudbrook Park, Roland Park, Guilford, Dundalk and Gibson Island.

FMOPL is dedicated to developing a statewide commitment to its great Olmsted legacy and seeks to provide a forum for park advocates, landscape architects, planners, conservationists, historians, and interested citizens. In 1987, the
WAVE HILL STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION FOR NAOP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Long-range planning topped the 1989 agenda for the NAOP Board of Trustees. The Board convened January 20-21 at the Wave Hill Environmental Center in New York City for a two-day strategic planning session led by Pittsburgh board member, Eloise Hirsh. The trustees developed a series of short- and long-term goals and drafted a comprehensive mission statement for the organization. The mission statement is as follows:

The National Association for Olmsted Parks is the leading national advocate for the Olmstedian philosophy of landscape design. We seek to:

--Promote the design principles of Frederick Law Olmsted.

--Preserve and enhance our national heritage of historic parks and landscapes.

--Continue the Olmsted tradition in modern landscape management and design.

We offer support, advice, research, and information to those involved with preservation of historic landscapes and the creation of new ones. As a multidisciplinary coalition, we work to increase awareness and appreciation of the benefits and values of historic landscapes.

NAOP is committed to the belief that these landscapes foster individual and community well-being.

Trustees also worked on a structure for the Board and its committees and for the organization itself, that will better support the organization’s mission and be more responsive to the membership. They worked out solutions to administrative and internal organization problems and mapped out a fundraising strategy. Plans for the organization’s brochure were finalized. The trustees expect that the plan will guide the Board during the next two years and result in a strengthening of the NAOP.

NEWS AND NOTICES

San Francisco, CA:

Theodore Osmundson, NAOP Trustee from San Francisco, California, was honored with the 1988 Christian Petersen Design Award from the College of Design at his alma mater, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa.

Louisville, KY:

Jerry Abramson, Mayor of the City of Louisville, recently established a steering committee to advise him on the creation of an Olmsted Park Conservancy, as had been suggested to him by the Louisville Friends of the Parks. The first meeting was held February 15. The steering committee would be responsible for raising money from the private sector and establishing a public/private partnership to guide the use and future of the Olmsted parks.

Boston, MA:

The Boston Globe reported in the December 8 edition that the Landmark Sears building, an art-deco landmark, is scheduled to be sold to The Urban Investment Co. of Chicago, a development company. The partnership intends to return to the city of Boston the 1.7-acre parking lot on Park Drive which was part of the Emerald Necklace park system.

A ribbon-cutting at Buttonwood Park in New Bedford, a groundbreaking at Worcester's Elm Park, and the formation of the Friend's of Newton's Olmsted Park were among the highlights of the 1988 Olmsted Program in Massachusetts. The Olmsted Historic Landscape Preservation Program was established in 1983 and is administered under the state's Department of Environmental Management. The program is providing technical assistance to communities statewide and funding for the study and rehabilitation of nine historic urban parks. Staff now on board at the Olmsted Program are: Chris Green, Director; Julie Johnson, Assistant Director; and Patrice Kish, Project Manager for the parks in Brockton, New Bedford, and Fall River.

The program has awarded grants to Boston, Brockton, Brookline, Fall River,
Lynn, New Bedford, Springfield, and Worcester. The grants fund the preparation of an historic landscape report, a master plan, and restoration improvements. To date the program milestones include:

—Completion of master plans for parks in Brockton, New Bedford, Fall River and Springfield.

—Construction of significant restoration improvements completed at Buttonwood Park in New Bedford including expansion of the "Great Lawn", pedestrian concourse, installing appropriately designed benches, and plantings.

—Improvements in Worcester's Elm Park included improving historic views, appropriate lighting, benches and plantings.

For more information on the Olmsted Program, contact Ms. Julie Johnson, Assistant Director, Olmsted Program, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management, Division of Planning and Development, 235 Friend Street, Boston, MA 02114. (617) 727-3160.

Baltimore, MD:
Local researchers discovered forgotten maps in the storage vaults of the city Department of Recreation and Parks in the City of Baltimore. The drawings and maps include a sketch by Charles Latrobe for Patterson Park Pagoda, Olmsted Brothers' designs for Gwynns Falls Parkway and Swann Park, and the plans for the iron bear cages at the Baltimore Zoo. In May of 1989 some of these items will be displayed at City Hall Galleries under the title "Green Legacy: Original Drawings and Photographs of Baltimore's Park System."

Chicago, IL:
The Park District is studying plans for the reuse of the Refectory Building in Washington Park, an Olmsted-designed park of 336 acres. The building, which was designed with the original master plan, has been closed for a number of years and has undergone severe deterioration. The Friends of the Park will be hosting Sunday tours of Olmsted Parks during the summer of 1989. The tours will focus on the history and design criteria of the parks used by the park designers, Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., and Calvert Vaux.
CONFERENCES


QUEBEC CITY: June 1989, Annual Conference for the Alliance for Historical Landscape Preservation to be held in Quebec City. Contact: Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation, 470 Laurier Avenue West #1002, Ottawa Ontario K1R 7W9.


DESIGNS BY OLMSTED FIRM KEY TO MAINE RESTORATION AND PRESERVATION ACTIVITIES

The State Capitol Commission was created by legislative authority in April of 1988 to oversee the planning of the state capitol and grounds. Eleanor Ames, an NAOP Trustee, was appointed to the Commission. The Commission has jurisdiction over the exterior and interior of the State Capitol and the immediate grounds. One section of the grounds was designed by the Olmsted Firm in 1921. Elizabeth Igleheart, Architectural Historian with the Maine Historical Preservation Commission, prepared a nomination for Capitol Park which was submitted to the Maine Historic Preservation Commission in January, 1989.

In 1831 the Maine legislature appropriated funds to complete the public buildings and grounds. The space at that time included the grounds around the state building as well as a large L-shaped parcel of approximately 30 acres. The grounds underwent improvements from 1838 until the Civil War, when they suffered the same indignities as did many public spaces, including the Mall in Washington, D.C., of being commandeered for regiments and military gear. In 1920 the Capitol complex was the focus of an improvement project commissioned by then Governor Carl Milliken who engaged the services of the Olmsted Brothers to prepare a plan for the Capitol grounds. A copy of the preliminary plan, entitled Maine State Park, is found on page 5. The plan was broken into separate projects and was under the direction of Carl Rust Parker, a Portland-based landscape architect, who worked with the Olmsted Firm. Maine State Park, or Capitol Park as it is called today, remains relatively unchanged from the 1920 effort, although a Vietnam War Memorial was erected in 1985.

A second restoration project, the Blaine House Restoration Project begun in 1987, is a joint effort between the public and private sectors, to insure the future of the executive mansion. The Blaine House was donated to the State of Maine in 1919. The State is responsible for the upkeep and operation of the mansion while the private sector, consisting of foundations and private citizens, will undertake its restoration and preservation. The Grounds Committee of the Blaine Restoration Fund, which has Eleanor G. Ames as one of its members, will develop a master plan for the grounds based on a 1920 design prepared by the Olmsted Brothers.

One further note: In April 1989 the Portland Park System, designed by the Olmsted Firm in the early 1900s, will be nominated for listing on the National Register. Elizabeth Igleheart is preparing these documents as well.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Novel Olmsted by Dana F. White

Even the most dedicated Olmstedian will feel the occasional urge to break away from restoration guides, landscape manuals, and park histories and turn to lighter literary works. So that the break will not prove to be too abrupt, let me recommend a few novels about Olmsted and/or his landscapes.

J. D. Salinger, Catcher in the Rye. Bantam Books, 1951. This now classic tragi-comedy of the disintegration of a disturbed adolescent set many of its most critical episodes in Central Park, including hero Holden Caulfield's final emotional crisis at the carousel. Early on, he raised the oft-quoted question "about
the lagoon in Central Park. I was wondering where the ducks went when the lagoon got all icy and frozen over. I wondered if some guy came in a truck and took them away to a zoo or something. Or if they just flew away."

Jack Finney, *Time and Again*. Simon and Schuster, 1970; Fireside paperback, 1985. Advertised as "an illustrated novel", this science-fiction and counterculture classic features a protagonist who, at the direction of an Ollie North-like operative, lives out Einstein's Theory of Relativity by passing back into time through the Central Park of the 1960s into the New York of the 1880s, and then back again, on CIA business.

Thomas Boyle, *Only the Dead Know Brooklyn*. Penguin Books, 1985. This is a thriller that employs the geography of Brooklyn in its development of a dual plot about a terrorist-inspired hostage-taking and the grisly doings of a spooky serial murderer. The emotions evoked by a drive through Prospect Park and along its connecting parkways (pp. 76–79) are anything but Olmstedian. Recommended, but not as bedtime reading.

Helen Yglesias, *Family Feeling*. Dial Press, 1976. The best for last! *Family Feeling* is a brilliant novel in which FLO appears as the subject of the fictional narrator's projected biography-cum-film and in which his landscapes influence the lives of the family members who are the focus of Yglesias' moving story. Olmsted himself would have applauded the novel's resolution.

**MEMBERSHIP DUES DUE**

Our fiscal year runs from May 1 through April 30. Annual dues are payable as of May 1, 1989. Current members will be sent a reminder letter.

Contributions are always welcome and are tax deductible. Checks should be made payable to NAOP and sent to the address on the masthead.

For address changes, membership dues, contributions, or to order back issues of the newsletter ($3.00 each), call 202/362–9511 or write:

The Administrator
NAOP
5010 Wisconsin Avenue
Room 308
Washington D.C. 20016

**EDITOR'S COLUMN**

Editor: Piera M. Weiss

The Editor invites readers to submit technical articles, history, lore, book reviews, and photographs of interest to Olmstedians for possible publication in the newsletter. Photographs should be suitable for reproduction and fully captioned. Suggestions regarding format and content are also solicited. Material should be submitted to: Editor, NAOP, 5010 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, Room 308, Washington D.C. 20016.

The newsletter is published three times a year with issues in the fall and spring and a summer update. The Editor welcomes feature articles, news items and announcements, notices of forthcoming events and programs; as well as ideas for topics to be covered, and books to be reviewed.

Thanks to the contributors to this issue: Eleanor Ames on Maine, Sandy Sparks who designed the center brochure and submitted information on the FMOPL, Sanford Parisky, Chairman of NAOP, Dana White, Eloise Hirsch, and Arlyn Levec on the Boston update.