NEW TRUSTEES ELECTED
AT ANNUAL BOARD MEETING

On May 5, 1989, the NAOP Board of Trustees held its annual meeting in Baltimore, Maryland. The new Executive Committee consists of:

Chairman: Sanford Parisky, CT
Vice Chairman: Clyde Eller, NY
Eloise Hirsh, PA
Catherine Joy Johnson, WA
Marion Fressley, MA
Nicholas Quennell, NY
Jerroid Soesbe, IL
Treasurer: Charles Beveridge, DC
Assistant Treasurer: Eric O'Brien, MA
Secretary: Eleanor Ames, ME
Corresponding Secretary: Arlyn Levee, MA

William Dunn, KY, Caroline Loughlin, MO, and Sandra Sparks, MD, are the new members elected to the Board.

Each Board member was appointed to one of six newly created working committees: Finance, Development, Communication and Outreach, Membership, Public Issues, and Special Projects. Each committee will set goals for 1990. The Finance Committee will manage the on-going finances of the organization. The Development Committee will conduct a special contribution drive, seek grants, and pursue aid from private foundations. The Communications and Outreach Committee will concentrate on linkage with other groups. At least one NAOP representative or speaker will attend the meetings/conferences of non-NAOP groups. The Membership Committee looks to increase the number of members through recruitment of associations, universities, colleges, and park directors. The goal is expansion of membership in each region and category. The Public Issues Committee intends to establish a policy for quick reaction and long-term issue reaction. The Special Projects Committee is considering reprints of park reports, video/slide shows, a bibliography, and technical leaflets.

SEPTEMBER NAOP WORKSHOP PLANNED
FOR ESSEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

On September 23, 1989, the Essex County Department of Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs will host an NAOP workshop. There will be a morning workshop followed in the afternoon by tours of urban parks and reservations. NAOP participants will focus on practical steps toward researching plans and strategies for preserving these historic landscapes. Registrants will have the opportunity to view Branch Brook, Orange, Verona, and Grover Cleveland parks as well as Eagle Rock and South Mountain reservations. For further information, please contact Kathleen P. Galop in the Office of the Director at (201) 857-5693.

BALTIMORE CONFERENCE

The annual NAOP conference held in May, "Reviving the Olmsted Vision: Linking People and Greenspaces," attracted a diverse group of 130 attendees. A successful conference was made even more so by the coincidental showing of two exhibits on parks and recreation in Baltimore. At the opening reception at Baltimore's City Hall, visitors were treated to a display of original Olmsted drawings, historic photographs, postcards, and current aerial views of the city's extensive park system. The second exhibit displayed at the nearby Peale Museum, "The Play Life of the City; Baltimore's Recreation and Parks, 1900 - 1955," gave viewers additional insight into the planning of the parks as well as the cultural and social context of park use.

The morning sessions of the conference, focused on the inventory process, which included presentations by archivists working with the Olmsted Papers at the Library of Congress and at the Olmsted National Historic Site in Brookline. The second theme of the conference, linking people and greenspace, dealt with restoration plans for Roland Park and Sudbrook Park, Olmsted-designed garden suburbs, and the American Society of Landscape Architect's Revitalization Plan for the Wyman Park Drive/33 Street Corridor, designed by Olmsted.
On Sunday bus tours took attendees to waterfront parks, civic squares, Roland Park, and Sudbrook Park.

The Play Life of a City: Baltimore's Recreation and Parks 1900-1955


IN REMEMBRANCE:
ALBERT FEIN, OLMSTED HISTORIAN AND WRITER

On March 9, 1989, Albert Fein, a nationally known scholar of landscape architectural history, died. Mr. Fein, was at the forefront of the current interest in Frederick Law Olmsted and edited Landscape into Cityscape, Frederick Law Olmsted's Plans for a Greater New York City, published in 1967 by the Cornell University Press. In the 1970s, Mr. Fein prepared a report for the American Society of Landscape Architects which helped to shape the landscape architecture profession's outlook. The report suggested that more teaching of landscape architectural history was needed, and subsequently more schools began to include that subject in their regular curriculum.

AWARDS

The Wellesley College Alumnae Achievement Award citation was conferred to NAOB Board member Elizabeth Browning Barlow Rogers for having "transformed acres of Central Park wasteland into a place of pleasure, beauty and joy."

Ms. Rogers serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the Central Park Conservancy, whose primary goal has been to raise the $50 million needed, to restore the 843-acre park and endow future maintenance.

NEW BULLETIN FOR ALLIANCE FOR HISTORIC LANDSCAPE PRESERVATION

The Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation began publishing a Bulletin in March 1989. The Bulletin will serve as a forum for members as well as a vehicle to profile works in progress. Malcolm Cairns is the compiler and can be contacted at the Department of Landscape Architecture, College of Architecture and Planning, Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47306.

PROGRAM IN LANDSCAPE PRESERVATION PLANNED

The Landscape Design Program, Center for Career Education and Workshops, George Washington University, is proud to announce that it is the recipient of a planning grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The grant will support the development of a new certificate program in historic landscape preservation, as well as a conference in the Spring of 1990 on progress in the field of historic landscape preservation and restoration.

The new certificate program is intended to train students with backgrounds in landscape design/landscape architecture in the skills necessary to pursue historic landscape projects. The curriculum will offer courses in preservation technology, archival research, document preparation, strategies for preservation and/or restoration, and American landscape history.

Francis Lombard, Director of the Landscape Design Program, and Piera Weiss, consulting Landscape Architect, will be directing the project with the assistance of consulting landscape historians, landscape and architectural preservationists, and archivists.

If you would like to receive updates concerning the program and conference, please send your name and address to Landscape Design Program, Center for Career Education and Workshops, George Washington University, 801 22nd Street NW, T-409, Washington, DC 20052, or call (202)-994-7036.

CONFERENCES

NEW YORK

The New York State Association for Olmsted Parks (NYSAsOP) joined with the Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities (SPLIA) to present "The Olmsted on Long Island: Great Estates of the North Shore." Robert B. McKay, Director of SPLIA, began the morning seminar with a presentation, "The Long Island Country House Phenomenon," in which he discussed architecture and themes in local social history. Lorraine Gilligan, the Chief Operating Officer for Coe Hall, the estate of William Robertson Coe, provided the architectural and historical overview of the estate. Cynthia Zaltzewsky presented five important historic landscapes of Long Island, including La Selva, home of Harry Sanderson; Ormston, former estate of John E. Aldred; Caumsett, the Marshall Field III estate; and Westbrook, the Bayard Cutting Estate, now the Cutting Arboretum.

For those who were unable to attend the seminar, Coe Hall, Planting Fields, Caumsett, and the Cutting Arboretum are open to the public.

BUFFALO

Buffalo, New York, will be the site for the annual NAOP conference in the Spring of 1990 and will mark the tenth anniversary of the organization. It was in Buffalo that the NAOP was formed, when Erie County Legislator, Joan K. Bozer, organized a committee of citizens who were concerned about the future of their parks. The small local group blossomed into the nationwide network of advocates for Olmsted-designed parks, NAOP. The group held its first conference in May 1980.

Buffalo is the appropriate setting for this celebration, not only because NAOP was formed there, but because of the rich legacy of Olmsted-designed public spaces throughout the city. The nation's first Olmsted-designed park and parkway system was planned for the City of Buffalo. Today, its six parks, connecting parkways, and the planned residential community of Parkside are included in the thematic designation of the National Register of Historic Places.

The local committee is planning a conference that will use Buffalo as an example of ten years of education, preservation, and restoration of historic landscapes. Sessions are planned on national issues of significance including: the past and future of the Olmsted park movement, the green movement, and changing attitudes towards parks and green-space as important aspects of city life. A panel will assess the Olmsted-planned neighborhood, Parkside, and its relation to modern community planning. Issues pertaining to a specific landscape will be discussed in a presentation of the restoration master plan of South Park.

Tours of the Buffalo park system and Olmsted landscapes in nearby western New York will be offered as well.

LOUISVILLE

The Louisville Friends of Parks (LFOP) will be sponsoring "Celebration of Parks" events in the three Olmsted, Sr., designed parks throughout the summer. The plans to organize an Olmsted Conservancy are well underway. The Task Force appointed in July 1988 to advise the Mayor on the process and program for a conservancy will present its report later this July. Recommendations include a $10 million dollar endowment, hiring staff, and funding a master plan within the first two years.

RHODE ISLAND

The first phase of a comprehensive statewide inventory of historic designed landscapes in Rhode Island was completed in August 1988. A small grant from the Rhode Island Legislature allowed the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission to hire landscape historian Lucinda Brockway to conduct archival research, undertake preliminary site inspections, and prepare a written report which included a history of landscape architecture in Rhode Island and the results of the research.

The resulting over 200-page document and associated backup data forms the basis for the next phase of the inventory: continuation of archival research, analysis of sites for National Register eligibility, preparation of National Register...
nominations, and in-depth research focusing primarily on properties that illustrate an intended attempt at landscaping for pleasure as compared to utilitarian designs. This eliminated farms, mill complexes, pre-colonial landscapes, and commercial properties from consideration. Over 400 properties were documented, 181 of which were Olmsted or Olmsted firm designs. This is a dense concentration of historic designed landscapes in an area roughly 50 miles square. Even so, Ms. Brockway feels that many more remain undocumented.


The Rhode Island Association for Olmsted Landscapes, in a joint effort with the Rhode Island Chapter of the ASLA, spent a warm Sunday in June 1988 performing windshield surveys and photographing approximately 20 percent of the inventoried sites. In groups of two or three, the volunteers attempted to document as many sites as possible within a given time frame. This approach was very successful in determining the existence, condition, and use of each site and in acquiring gross corroborating data and a photographic record. It was felt that, with minor modifications, this approach could be utilized in other phases of the inventory process.

Proposals for the second phase of the inventory are being evaluated by the Historical Preservation Commission and work is scheduled to begin shortly.

Karst Hoogeboom
COUNTY OF ESSEX
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL AFFAIRS
AND
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF OLMS TED PARKS

Announces a one-day conference featuring the landscape architecture of the Essex County Park System.

"Olmsted's Landscape Architecture in Essex County's Historic Parklands: the restoration and preservation of America's first county-wide system of parks, parkways and reservations."

Featured will be an overview of the Olmsted designs for Essex County; the schematic drawings and plans for the restoration of the carriage concourse in Branch Brook Park; the New Jersey State and National Register process for historic landscapes; and the role of the New Jersey Historic Sites Council in protecting Register properties against encroachments.

The afternoon will be devoted to tours of the urban and suburban parks, the reservations, and a tour of Llewellyn Park - a private residential community designed by Olmsted.

Date: Saturday, September 23, 1989
Time: 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Place: Essex County Parks Headquarters
       115 Clifton Avenue, Newark, NJ 07104

Registration: $40.00 before September 10, 1989
             $30.00 thereafter
             Includes coffee, lunch and reception

Lodging: Gateway Hilton
         Pennsylvania Station Plaza
         Newark, NJ 07102 (201) 622-5000
         $75.00 per night including breakfast

Information: Kathleen P. Galop, Office of the Director
            Essex County Parks (201) 857-5693
            Residence (201) 564-9718

REGISTRATION

Name
Address

Phone: Business: Home:

Please make lodging reservations for me at the Gateway Hilton for the nights of

My check payable to the "Essex County Department of Parks" is enclosed for $40.00 (pre-September 10th) or $50.00.

Return registration and check to: Kathleen P. Galop, Office of the Director
Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs
22 Fairview Avenue
Cedar Grove, New Jersey 07009
Students and faculty at Simmons College in Boston have always considered the portion of Frederick Law Olmsted's Boston park system that wraps itself around The Fenway as "their" campus. Hundreds of photographs of campus life have been taken over the years with Olmsted's work as a backdrop. Shown at left is Cora C. Colburn, a dormitory matron, out for a walk in front of the footbridge near Chapel Station, part of Boston's Emerald Necklace, c. 1908. Photographer unknown. Photograph from the Dora Sherburne Seubert Collection, Simmons College Archives, Boston, MA. At right is a wooden footbridge crossing the Muddy River, across the street from Simmons College main campus and the Isabella Stewart Museum (not shown), c. 1940s. Photographer unknown. Photograph courtesy of Simmons College Archives, Boston, MA. Photographs provided by Megan Sniffen-Marinoff, College Archivist.

Historical Treasure: The Unmined Riches of Series B in the Olmsted Associates Records

Carolyn F. Hoffman
Frederick Law Olmsted Papers

While preparing the Master List of Design Projects of the Olmsted Firm, 1857-1950, it was necessary to examine over five hundred job files in Series B of the Olmsted Associates Records in order to check inconsistencies and inaccuracies, to ascertain whether the job number listed was indeed assigned to an actual project, and in many cases what the project was since it was not readily apparent from the title. This "checking" provided me with an opportunity to walk literally not only through a century of the Olmsted firm's existence but through one hundred years of America's development. In doing so I discovered several things, probably the most striking of which was the richness of the material not only for landscape designers and planners but for social and cultural historians as well.

Of course, not all of the files in Series B contain valuable information. Many contain only a letter or two, others pertain to projects that border on the humorous, if not the bizarre. For example, in 1925, the agent for a Hollywood movie mogul (Harry K. Aitken) contacted the Olmsted firm to help plan a "town" in Florida that Aitken wished to build for individuals in the motion picture industry. Henry Vincent Hubbard represented...
the Olmsted firm at a meeting concerning the proposed project and noted that "they have some idea as to the appearance of the town, part 'like a circus.'" He concluded his notes with the statement, "The whole thing looks funny to me. It may be a scheme to move the real estate. It may be a real attempt on the part of some people who do not know the game. It may be that Aitken or somebody else does know." The firm decided not to become involved in such a shaky project but concluded a letter to Aitken's agent with the comment that it was so overcommitted that it could not take on any additional work.

In another instance a Boston company contacted the firm with a request that it "beautify" its billboards. The firm declined, stating, "Since the creation and preservation of such beauty of scenery is perhaps the main activity in which our firm is engaged, we feel that it would be better for us not to be concerned in this particular problem, which you have so kindly put before us."

The firm forwarded a copy of its letter to all members of the Boston Society of Landscape Architects and drew at least one interesting response from a member that foreshadowed the Highway Beautification Act of 1965. Frank A. Waugh, professor of landscape gardening at Massachusetts Agricultural College in Amherst, wrote, "For myself I shall never be satisfied with anything less than the complete elimination of billboard advertising from all public ways, whether parkways, boulevards, city streets, suburban streets or country roads. The whole scheme is inartistic, unsocial, unethical and I believe also uneconomic. I am opposed to it at all times and in all places, and I rejoice in every stand which is made against it."

Apart from these rather unusual files, however, most files in Series B do contain valuable historical material. The project that was of most interest to me as a southern historian was the work the firm did for the American Textile Company in Cartersville, Georgia. E. L. McClain, an Ohioan, owned a cotton factory and mill village outside of Cartersville and invited John C. Olmsted to visit the grounds in 1909. Olmsted wrote a four-page report concerning his initial visit to the site and noted that "most of the house yards are only partially covered with Bermuda grass. Few have any trees. Boys break them down. A few have shrubs, roses, and chrysanthemums, etc., but the general effect of the village is of monotony as to houses and barrenness and desolation as to yards."

The report offers not only observations on the appearance of the village houses and grounds, but perceptive comments about labor conditions and race relations in southern mill villages as well. While Olmsted noted that this particular mill village was "far better looking" than most, he also wrote that although McClain desired to improve the quality of life of his employees he was restrained by a "cotton mill association" to which he did not belong, and that McClain "did not dare depart much from their rules or he would get into trouble." For example, mill owners did not compete for workers by raising wages or lowering rents. Therefore, McClain attempted to retain his labor force by improving living conditions in the village. He intended to build a church, improve village streets, plant more trees, shrubbery, and grass, and build an outdoor gymnasium and children's playground. Olmsted suggested that McClain might plant fruit trees in the yards and put in catch basins and drains in the streets. The houses were built on piers and many had standing water underneath them. Olmsted recommended that the low-lying areas be filled in and brick or cement plaster walls be built to cover the space between the piers in an effort to prevent further erosion and to improve the houses' exterior appearance.

Through the years the Olmsted firm offered suggestions to other mill village owners in the South as well as several north of the Mason Dixon Line. An enterprising student could write a fine paper using pertinent files in Series B to compare northern and southern mill villages.

Many changes in American society, culture, and technology can be followed simply by studying the job files in Series B of the Olmsted Associates Records as they span a century of development. The types of projects the Olmsted firm undertook changed as the country moved from the nineteenth century into the twentieth. For example, one can find files for air fields and electrical power stations from 1910 to 1930. Also, in the twentieth century the firm began to landscape the grounds for huge companies such as Bell Telephone Laboratories and National Cash Register. In addition the Olmsteds were very much involved in housing during both world wars. Indeed, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., was an offic
nder of the U.S. Housing Corporation during World War I. During World War II, the Olmsted firm served as site planners for the National Housing Agency. Drawing on its many years' experience in laying out subdivisions, the firm planned several sites in Massachusetts and Maine during and after World War II for the Federal Public Housing Authority.

A word of caution, however, for anyone planning to use the Series B job files in the near future. The Olmsted Associates Records is the most heavily used collection in the manuscript division of the Library of Congress, but many of the records are so old they are literally falling apart. Because of their heavy use and the fragility of the documents, the library has begun microfilming the collection. Series A, consisting of 76 volumes of outgoing correspondence of the firm between 1884 and 1899, has already been microfilmed, and at the present time the Library of Congress is microfilming the entire Series B (all 523 boxes). At this writing Box 100 containing files for job numbers 1600-1700 is currently being microfilmed, with approximately ten boxes being filmed each week. The library hopes to have the filming completed by January 1, 1990. Because it will still have to be edited and spliced, the microfilm itself will not be available for another year and a half to two years. Until then researchers will be able to use the original records. If you wish to use any of the files in the B Series between now and when filming is completed, it would be wise to call the manuscript reading room of the Library of Congress to be sure the boxes you want are not being microfilmed when you want to use them. Call the manuscript reading room at (212)-707-5387 between 8:30 and 4:30, Monday through Friday.

When you are doing research, please keep in mind that Series B is not the only series containing useful material. It is strongly recommended to anyone using the Olmsted Associates Records to check all of the series for pertinent information, particularly the Series A letterbooks. In an effort to make Series E (Business Records, 1868-1950) more useful to researchers, Paul D. Ledvina, archives specialist, has separated the quarterly and monthly reports and the reports of visits from 1891 to 1899 from their bound volumes and has refiled them in Hollinger boxes, making them much easier to search and photocopy.

BOOKS

American Landscape Architecture, Designers and Places, edited by William H. Tishler with contributions by Charles Beveridge, Shary Berg, Arleyv Levee, David Schuyler, David Streetfield, and others. Preservation Press, National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1989, 244 pp. With illustrations, $10.95. Collection of short articles about 21 designers, well-known and not-so-well-known, including all three Olmsteds, Warren Manning, Henry Vincent Hubbard, Calvert Vaux, Charles Eliot, Ellen Shipman, John Nolen and Albert Davis Taylor, among others, and 21 categories of landscapes, such as cemeteries, corporate landscapes, state parks, streetscapes. While the book lacks depth, its breadth should spark interest in those unfamiliar with the range of the profession of American landscape architecture from its infancy to the present. The quality of the chapters is uneven, however, and readers should take note of the bibliography if their interest is piqued. A 10 percent discount is available to NAOP members through Preservation Press. 202/673-4066.

Pleasure Grounds: Andrew Jackson Downing and Montgomery Place, edited by Jacquetta M. Haley. Sleepy Hollow Press, 1988, pp. 96, $19.95. Interesting monograph on the work of Downing at one of the Hudson River estates. Downing's descriptions and thoughts about the improvements are worth reading. Little is offered in analysis, but the illustrations are wonderful.