

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Garden Club of America Entrance Markers at Wisconsin Avenue (at Western Avenue)
other names _____

2. Location

street & number Wisconsin Avenue at Western Avenue not for publication
city or town Washington, D.C. vicinity
state District of Columbia code DC county _____ code 001 zip code _____

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments).

DAVID MALONEY, ACTING SHPO 6-19-2007
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

DC HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments).

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby, certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
 Determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper _____
Date of Action _____

Garden Club of America Markers at Wisconsin Avenue
(at Western Avenue)

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- Private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2		buildings
2		sites
		structures
		objects
		Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

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

number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION/CULTURE/monument/marker

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION/CULTURE/monument/marker

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th-Early 20th Century American

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation

walls

roof

other

Aquia Creek Sandstone

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Garden Club of America Markers at
Wisconsin Avenue (at Western Avenue)

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State

Section 7 Page 1

Description Summary:

Between April 1932 and October 1933, pairs of stone markers, designed by architect Edward Donn to identify important entrances into the District of Columbia from Maryland and Virginia, were erected at six different locations into the city. This pair of stone markers at Wisconsin Avenue at Western Avenue represents two of seven surviving markers (three pairs and one single marker). The surviving pairs of markers are located here, on the east and west sides of Wisconsin Avenue at Western Avenue, at Westmoreland Circle, and at Chevy Chase Circle. The single marker is found in the median at the center of Georgia Avenue at the District line at Kalmia Road and Alaska Avenue. All of the extant markers have signs of weathering, pollution and other abuse. Most, if not all, have been knocked over at some point by motorists, or removed entirely and re-erected in the same general, but not exact same locations. The missing markers were likely removed and discarded during road widenings and/or construction; however, nothing is known for sure of their fate.

General Description:

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

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

The Virginia markers (no longer extant) had a seal of Virginia on one side and the commemorative seal of Washington on the other side.

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

Friendship Heights Markers:

The Friendship Heights markers are located on the east and west sides of Wisconsin Avenue, on the north side of Western Avenue. Here, the markers emerge directly out of the concrete sidewalk and may have been re-erected during the 1977 construction of METRO when they were "discovered" by METRO contractors. The western marker, located just north of the light standard at the crosswalk, stands at a reduced three-foot height. The District cartouche, on the south side of the marker and facing the District of Columbia, is heavily worn. George Washington and Lady Liberty are still distinct, although the background carvings are barely visible. In addition, the fluting is chipped and worn and cracks are apparent where the marker has been broken and likely re-mounted. This marker has been repeatedly hit by motorists and re-erected on its broken base, thus explaining its reduced height.

The eastern marker is located on the brick sidewalk, between a traffic light and street light standard. This marker is in remarkable shape and is the most intact of all of the surviving markers. The marker stands its original five-foot height, has clean fluting lines on the upper 2/3 of the shaft and intact cartouches with that of the District of Columbia on the south side being particularly clear and distinct. The dedication panel bearing the inscription "Erected by the Garden Club of America 1932" remains intact at the lower part of the western side of the shaft facing Wisconsin Avenue. The bottom third of the shaft is worn and chipped, especially on the southern side facing the on-coming northbound traffic.

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Garden Club Markers at Wisconsin and Western Ave.
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history.
- B** Property associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

Area of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Community Planning and Development; Landscape Architecture

Period of Significance

1932-1933

Significant Dates

1932; 1933

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Edward Donn, Architect

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

Previous documentation on files (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

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Garden Club of America Markers at Wisconsin
Avenue (at Western Avenue)

Name of Property

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Summary Statement of Significance:

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

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

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

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Resource History and Historic Context:

Wisconsin Avenue (at Western Avenue) Markers

The first pair of entry markers was erected on April 24, 1932 on the Virginia side of Key Bridge. Over a year later, in October 1933, another pair of entry markers was dedicated at Chevy Chase Circle, along with the Newlands Memorial Fountain. According to the *Evening Star*, the Chevy Chase markers were the "sixth to be placed by the Garden Club of America at important gateways to the city." The article notes that the other five pairs of markers were placed at the 16th Street entrance, at Wisconsin Avenue, at Georgia and Alaska avenues, and on the Virginia side of "both the Highway and Key Bridges."

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Very little else is known about the Wisconsin Avenue markers. According to accounts in the press in 1930, traffic engineers planned on marking the District line at Wisconsin and Western avenues by a circle, with the roadway passing through the center of the circle for arterial traffic.¹ This proposal was not carried out, but by October 1933, the Garden Club of America markers had been erected on either side of Wisconsin Avenue at Western Avenue with no public acknowledgement found in the newspapers.

¹ "Circle and Road Plan is Approved as D.C. Gateway," *Washington Star*, 1930 (National Archives Clippings Files)

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Garden Club of America Markers at Wisconsin
Avenue (at Western Avenue)

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Major Bibliographical References:

“Commission of Fine Arts Minutes,” October 16, 1930; January 6, 1931; February 12, 1931; April 15, 1931; May 26, 1933. The minutes include copies of correspondence between Charles Moore, Chairman of CFA and Ulysses S. Grant, III, Director, Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital; and between Mr. Moore and Mrs. Frank B. Noyes, Chairman, National Capital Committee, The Garden Club of America.

“D.C. Line Markers Set,” *The Evening Star*, April 24, 1932.

“D.C. Memorial and Entry Pylons Will be Hastened,” *The Evening Star*, n.d. (circa March 1931) (from the Garden Club of Chevy Chase Vertical Files).

“Entrances to Washington,” *The Washington Post*, September 7, 1931, Editorials.

“Favor 2-Column Portals Design,” *The Evening Star*, December 19, 1930 A-2.

“Francis Newlands Will be Honored: Fountain at Chevy Chase Circle Will be Dedicated Tomorrow Afternoon,” *The Evening Star*, October 11, 1933 B-1

“Fund to Aid Clubs Beautify Portals Pledged by AAA,” *The Evening Star*, April 27, 1931.

“Notables Attend Francis Newlands Fount Dedication,” *The Evening Star*, October 13, 1933.

“Opening of Circle Gateway to Hills,” *The Washington Post*, November 20, 1932, R2.

“Plans for the Nationwide Celebration of the 200th Anniversary of the Birth of George Washington, 1932. Issued by the George Washington Bicentennial Commission, Washington, D.C. Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1931.

“Portals to be Studied, Planning Commission to Study Massachusetts Avenue Circle,” *The Evening Star*, December 17, 1931 B-1.

Ravenel, Alicia. “The GCA Mystery Markers in Washington, D.C.,” Unpublished paper for the Garden Club of Chevy Chase, MD., 1993

“Report of the Commission of Fine Arts, July 1, 1929 to December 31, 1934,” Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1936.

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“Tentative Programs of Major Events Arranged by the United States George Washington Bicentennial Commission and by the District of Columbia George Washington Bicentennial Commission in Observance of the Two Hundredth Anniversary of the Birth of George Washington,” Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1932.

“Tributes Paid to Memory of Newlands,” *The Washington Post*, October 13, 1933 p. 15.

“West D.C. Portal Plans are Ready,” *The Evening Star*, January 1, 1932.

“Wisconsin Avenue Entrance to City to be Considered,” *The Evening Star*, October 19, 1929.

Garden Club of America Markers at Wisconsin Avenue
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acree of Property Less than 1 acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	1 8 Zone	3 1 9 2 5 8 Easting	4 3 1 4 2 6 3 Northing	3			
2				4			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kim Williams
Organization D.C. Historic Preservation Office date October 2006
street & number 801 North Capitol Street, NE telephone 202 442-8840
city or town Washington, D.C. state District of Columbia zip code 20815

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- X A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

- X Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO)

name National Park Service; District Of Columbia, Department of Transportation
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et. seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Name of Property

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Verbal Boundary Description:

The Wisconsin Avenue (at Western Avenue) markers are located on the east and west sides of Wisconsin Avenue, immediately north of Western Avenue.

Boundary Justification:

The Wisconsin Avenue markers have stood on the site since their erection in 1933.

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Garden Club of America Entrance Markers at
Wisconsin Avenue (at Western Avenue)

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State

PHOTOGRAPHS

The following information is common to all photographs:

Garden Club of America Markers at Wisconsin Avenue (at Western Avenue)
Washington, D.C.
Kim Williams, photographer
March 2007
DC Historic Preservation Office (DC HPO)

- 1) View looking east showing western marker (foreground) and eastern marker (background)
1 of 5
- 2) View of western marker looking north showing District of Columbia cartouche
2 of 5
- 3) View of eastern marker looking north showing District of Columbia cartouche
3 of 5
- 4) Detail of District of Columbia cartouche (eastern marker)
4 of 5
- 5) Detail of dedication panel, west elevation of eastern marker
5 of 5