

CONGRESSIONAL CEMETERY

Historic Landscape and Structures Report

Washington, DC

The Architect of the Capitol

Project Data

Date: 2002-2003

Size: 32.5 acres

Context: Southeast Washington, DC

Completion Date: 2007

Scope of Work

- Historical Research and Documentation
- Condition Assessment
- Treatment Recommendations
- Maintenance Planning
- Master Planning
- Budget Projections
- Implementation Plan



Chapel (1913)



Prout Street (1913)

Project Description:

Congressional Cemetery began in 1807 as a private burying ground and became the resting-place for individuals and members of the new government who died in office and whose remains were not transported home. This trend of burying the general public and members of Congress continued until Arlington National Cemetery was established in 1864, during the Civil War. Among the 60,000 graves are soldiers, senators, Indian chiefs, and other notables including Matthew Brady, John Philip Sousa, and J. Edgar Hoover.

The layout of its streets and pedestrian ways adhere to the rigid layout of French architect Pierre L'Enfant's 1791 plan of Washington, DC. While the cemetery is nearly 200 years old, its formal design and layout have survived intact. Only through ornamentation and vegetation has this culturally significant landscape conformed to the changing trends in cemetery design. At one point, it enjoyed a "park-like setting" and as many as nine caretakers. While still privately owned, the Cemetery is operated by a non-profit organization. Money is tight and maintenance is all by contract. As a result, the appearance and physical condition of the landscape, its buildings and structures has deteriorated.

In 2002, our diverse and extensive team of consultants was hired to prepare a Cultural Landscape and Historic Structures Report on Congressional Cemetery. The purpose of our work is to:

- Research and document the history, changes and current conditions;
- Make recommendations for its complete rehabilitation;
- Create a master plan that will guide the future organization and growth of the Cemetery;
- Increase interment space and programmatic features; and
- Accomplish all this while implementing *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards*.



Rehabilitation Master Plan