

**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 process, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Francis Griffith Newlands Memorial Fountain
other names _____

2. Location

street & number Chevy Chase Circle, Connecticut and Western Aves., N.W. (Res. 335A) not for publication
city or town Washington vicinity
state D.C. Code DC county n/a code 001 zip 20015

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).

Signature of certifying office/Title _____ Date _____

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 office/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. State/Federal Agency 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

Francis Griffith Newlands Memorial Fountain
Name of Property

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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	
_____	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
1	_____	
1	0	Total

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

Memorials in Washington, D.C.

number of contributing resource previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function of Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION and CULTURE: work of art

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION and CULTURE: work of art

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Academic Abstraction

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation _____
walls _____
roof _____
other Aquia Sandstone and Concrete

Narrative Description

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

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DESCRIPTION

The *Francis Griffith Newlands Memorial Fountain* occupies the center of Chevy Chase Circle (Reservation 335A) located along the District of Columbia-Maryland boundary line. The circle marks the intersection of principal avenues, namely Connecticut and Western Avenues, N.W., and the secondary roads of Patterson and Grafton Streets and Magnolia Parkway. The simple sandstone fountain, designed by architect Edward W. Donn, Jr., was completed in 1933 and is representative of Academic Abstraction.

The Aquia Sandstone fountain (with concrete basin) has a sixty-foot diameter and incorporates a single bronze nozzle, located at the center, that sprays a jet of water approximately thirty-feet high. The 2 ½-foot-high face of the basin features simple classical mouldings; the sandstone shows signs of decay in some places. At the center of the fountain's southern side (facing the District of Columbia on axis with the centerline of Connecticut Avenue) is a slight projection with the following inscription:

Francis Griffith Newlands
1848-1917
Senator from Nevada
His Statesmanship Held True Regard For The Interests Of All Men
Founder of Chevy Chase
This Fountain Erected 1933 Authorized by Act of Congress

The fountain is surrounded by a continuous sandstone scupper (part of the original design) and a wide, circular walk (designed in 1956) comprised of irregular-shaped flagstone set in concrete. The 1956 design also added concrete benches with wooden slats at the outer edge of the circle. Flagstone paths radiate from the circular walk on axis with each of the roads that intersect the traffic circle. Curved planting beds, comprised of azaleas and roses, occupy the inner portions of the grassy areas between the radiating paths; the azaleas were planted with the 1956 refurbishment plan designed by Robert Andrews, Chief Landscape Architect, National Capital Parks. A narrow flagstone circular walk connects the radiating paths near the outer edge of the circle. A ring of willow oaks, at the outermost edge of the circle, was planted in 1933 by members of Maryland garden clubs.¹ Over time, some of these trees have been replaced, but the same species and design pattern has been maintained.

¹ "Newlands Memorial Fountain," *The Evening Star*, Oct. 13, 1933, p. B-12.

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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 as 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)

Art

Period of Significance

1933

Significant Dates

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

Edward Wilton Donn, Jr.

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:
NPS, National Capital Region Headquarters

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SIGNIFICANCE

The *Francis Griffith Newlands Memorial Fountain* is significant for its association with this lawyer-turned-congressman who was a leading figure in the development of upper northwest Washington, D.C., Chevy Chase, Maryland, and the irrigation of the arid western states. His wife, Edith McAllister Newlands, paid for the memorial designed by architect Edward W. Donn, Jr. It was erected under an Act of Congress approved on April 8, 1932 (47 Stat. 78) and dedicated on October 12, 1933. The memorial fountain is significant under Criterion C in the area of Art.

Francis Griffith Newlands (1848-1917) was born in Natchez, Mississippi to Scottish immigrants James Birney and Jessie (Burland) Newlands. That year his parents traveled up the Mississippi River to settle in Quincy, Illinois; later the family moved to Chicago before settling in Washington, D.C. Francis entered Yale College in 1863. He had to leave college during his junior year, because of his family's financial difficulties. (In 1901, Yale University conferred Newlands an honorary degree of Master of Arts.)² Returning to Washington, Francis took a job at the post office and studied law at Columbian College (now George Washington University) in the evenings. In 1869, he was admitted to the local bar. The following year, he moved to San Francisco with several letters of introduction, but no personal acquaintances.

Following a relatively brief amount of time, Newlands became counsel for William Sharon, who, as a young lawyer with an interest in business, left Illinois and moved to Sacramento, California in 1849, a year later he moved to San Francisco. Sharon had a keen interest in development and served on San Francisco's first board of aldermen. Over the next twenty years he made a fortune in conjunction with real estate investments (in San Francisco and Virginia City, Nevada) and the silver-rich Comstock Lode.³ Newlands became personally involved with Sharon's estate after marrying Clara Adeliade, one of Sharon's daughters, in 1874.⁴ The following year, Sharon was elected as a Republican to the U.S. Senate from Nevada.⁵ After arriving in Washington, he began investing in the local real estate market and purchased several undeveloped lots around Dupont Circle (then known as Pacific Circle). Upon William Sharon death in 1885, Newlands became an heir and a trustee of the estate. Sharon's mistress thereafter filed a suit against the estate that ultimately became contentious and protracted.

To separate himself from the problematic legal battle, Newlands decided to move to Nevada; he became a permanent resident two years later in 1888. He, moreover, began to invest outside of California and

² *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, 1904.

³ Sharon was also the principal beneficiary of William C. Ralston, the founder of the Bank of California and one of the four Kings of the Comstock lode.

⁴ Clara died, along with a newborn son, in 1882.

⁵ He served from March 1875 until March 1881, and chaired the 45th Congress' Committee on Mines and Mining (1877-1878).

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Nevada. In 1887, Newlands chose to divest the Sharon estate of its real estate holdings around Dupont Circle and with the proceeds purchase land in upper northwest Washington and Montgomery County, Maryland.⁶ Using front men, he and Senator William Morris Stewart (R-NV), another Comstock Lode millionaire, bought 1,713 acres between Woodley Park and Jones Bridge Road (two miles north of the District-Maryland line) from thirty-one different property owners. In the spring of 1890, George Ames, a retired Army colonel-turned-real estate agent, informed the press that a "Sharon Syndicate" was purchasing the land, thus forcing Newlands to go public. The Chevy Chase Land Company was incorporated on June 5, 1890. Its name derived from the largest parcel that had been acquired. This particular property had been part of an early-eighteenth-century land grant from Lord Baltimore to Colonel Joseph Belt.⁷ Newlands became the president of the new company and the owner of 2,400 shares of stock, Stewart held 1,100 shares, and five other men owned one share each.

Newlands planned Chevy Chase in a comprehensive manner, at a time when the professional field of planning was just emerging in the nation. Newlands wanted his picturesque community to exist free of all commercial activities and established it in Maryland so that its residents could have representation in Congress.⁸ From the beginning, the intent was to sell lots to individuals who planned to improve them. The Chevy Chase Land Company established zoning and building restrictions and provided streetcar access to the suburb. Access became possible, because the company had purchased nearly all of the land north of Calvert Street that would become Connecticut Avenue Extended. The company graded the nearly five miles of roadway, erected trestle bridges over Rock Creek (at Calvert Street and Klinge Road), and chartered and operated the Rock Creek Railroad Company on the right of way which it deeded to the District of Columbia. In Maryland, the company extended the avenue for another two miles, as far as Jones Bridge Road. Newlands had planned a continuous path of Connecticut Avenue in Maryland, but when a property owner in the northeasterly direction demanded a particular price, Newlands created Chevy Chase Circle to accommodate a directional change due north in order to avoid the "overpriced" parcel.

In 1893, Newlands was elected to the House of Representatives as a Democrat from Nevada. He served until 1903, when he became a Senator; he held this office until his death in 1917. During his twenty-four years in Congress, Newlands served on nineteen committees.⁹ In terms of District of Columbia affairs, he served on the Washington Board of Trade's Universities Committee and the Streets and Avenues Committee (1897-1898). The latter was instrumental to his advocacy in Congress for the D.C. Permanent Highway Plan (certified in 1898). Newlands supported the Senate Park Commission

⁶ Francis Newlands Papers, Yale University Archives, Box 1, Folder 1.

⁷ The July 10, 1720 land grant, Chevy Chase, derived its name from the Cheviot Hills, the hunting ground fought over by Earl Douglas of Scotland and Lord Percy of England in the late 14th century.

⁸ Elizabeth Lampl and Kimberly Williams, *Chevy Chase: A Home Suburb for the Nation's Capital* (Crownsville, MD: Maryland Historical Trust Press, 1998) 25.

⁹ See Albert W. Atwood, *Francis G. Newlands: A Builder of the Nation* (Washington: The Newlands Company, 1969) 49.

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established by Senator James McMillan. After Senator McMillan died, Newlands carried the torch for the commission's 1901-1902 plan and was instrumental in the establishment of the Commission of Fine Arts in 1910. He also served on the Board of Regents of the National Academy of Art from 1908-1909. In terms of national legislation, Newlands was concerned with the matter of silver coinage and immigration and race issues. His interests in Chinese immigrants reflected the concerns of his west coast constituency, but his position on the "negro issue" correlated with a broader public base. In June 1912, Newlands spoke in Baltimore as the first plank of the Democratic platform and advocated for the repeal of the 15th Amendment (guaranteeing that the right to vote cannot be denied based on race, ratified Feb 3, 1870).¹⁰ Over the years, however, the issue that he was most concerned with was irrigation in the West; he was the lead proponent of the Reclamation Act of 1902. Newlands was also one of the framers of the Federal Reserve Act (1913) and involved in the creation of the Federal Trade Commission Act (1914).

The development of Chevy Chase initially occurred very slowly. The Chevy Chase Land Company erected three model cottages around 1894. Newlands also had Philadelphia architect Lindley Johnson design a large Queen Anne house for himself and his family that fronted the northeast quadrant of Chevy Chase Circle. The family (he had married Edith McAllister in 1888) lived in this house seasonally and sporadically until 1898, when they decided to leave its isolation and move closer to the heart of the city.¹¹ Only twenty-seven houses had been erected by 1897. After another four years, an additional twenty-two residences had gone up. Although the company had recorded six subdivisions by Newlands's death in 1917, including Chevy Chase, D.C., sales did not really take off until the 1920s. In fact, 1922 marked the year the first dividend was paid—thirty-two years after the establishment of the company.

After Newlands died, Edith McAllister Newlands served as the Vice President and Director of the Chevy Chase Land Company. Its Board of Directors described her as "endowed with beauty and charm of manner, wise in counsel and sound in decision."¹² It was Edith's desire to have the fountain erected in her husband's memory; she paid for the entire project.¹³ A family friend, Edward Donn, who had retired from architecture the previous year, designed the fountain approved by the Commission of Fine Arts and dedicated on October 12, 1933. Charles Moore, another family friend and head of the

¹⁰ "Race Issue Plank for Democrats, Senator Newlands of Nevada," *New York Times* June 17, 1912, pg. 7.

¹¹ At this time, Newlands purchased Woodley, an early-nineteenth century estate, which ultimately became the scene of many informal gatherings between local businessmen, congressman, presidents, and foreign diplomats. The Newlands lived at Woodley until 1916, when they moved to 2328 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., a new residence designed by the architect and family friend Edward Donn, located at Sheridan Circle. (In 1797, Philip Barton Key, the uncle of Francis Scott Key, purchased 250 acres and built Woodley five years later. The Federal structure and its remaining seven acres were purchased in 1950 by the Maret School (founded 1916); the school's address is 3000 Cathedral Road.)

¹² Atwood, 42.

¹³ The fountain cost \$12,000, equivalent to \$158,000 in 2002.

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Commission of Fine Arts, was one of the speakers at the dedication ceremonies. Moore spoke of Newlands's vision and courage.

During the design review process, Moore took a personal interest in the *Newlands Fountain* because of whom it honored but also due to the type of memorial.¹⁴ The significance of fountains had been stressed in the report that accompanied the 1902 Senate Park Commission plan, written primarily by Moore. The report incorporated numerous photographs of various European fountains and argued the importance of erecting fountains throughout Washington in order to establish design parity with great European cities.¹⁵ As Newlands was the principal supporter of the plan after Senator McMillan died, it seems especially appropriate that a fountain was selected to memorialize this significant "local" developer.

Native Washingtonian Edward Wilton Donn, Jr. (1868-1953) was the son of a draftsman who worked for Thomas U. Walter on the U.S. Capitol and then acted as Walter's superintendent for construction of Saint Elizabeth's Hospital. Edward graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1891. He returned to Washington and began working in the private sector until he obtained a position in 1899 as a designer in the Office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury. In 1902, he left the government to establish the architectural firm, Wood, Donn & Deming. The partners worked together for a decade, during which time they created mansions for the city's socialites and elegant office buildings, such as the Union Trust Bank (1906), the Masonic Temple (1908, now the National Museum of Women in the Arts), and the Bureau and Standards Building (demolished). In his memoirs, Donn noted that Wood, Donn & Deming designed numerous houses in Chevy Chase, but failed to provide their addresses. He designed his own homes in Chevy Chase, first at 3801 Bradley Lane and then at 18 West Lenox Street. In 1912, Waddy B. Wood began his own firm, while the other two partners stayed together.

The firm of Donn and Deming, practiced for more than a decade. One of its designs was 2328 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. for the widowed Mrs. Edith Newlands. In 1924, the two partners began individual practices. It is at this point that Donn began to focus on restorations of historically significant buildings. His projects included Woodlawn Plantation, the Octagon House, Kenmore, and Wakefield—the birthplace of George Washington. Donn retired in 1931, but the following year agreed to Edith Newlands's request that he design the *Francis Newlands Memorial Fountain*.

¹⁴ "Newlands Memorial Fountain," p. B-12.

¹⁵ See Charles Moore, ed. *The Improvement of the Park System of the District of Columbia* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1902) 26-28.

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Edward W. Donn, Jr. was instrumental in establishing the Washington Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1887 and served as its first secretary; he served as the president in 1907, 1908, and 1916. He was also president of the Washington Architectural Club, 1898-1899, and was the first president of the D.C. Board of Examiners and Registrars.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Atwood, Albert W. *Francis G. Newlands: A Builder of the Nation*. Washington: The Newlands Company, 1969.
- Lampl, Elizabeth and Kimberly Williams. *Chevy Chase: A Home Suburb for the Nation's Capital*. Crownsville, MD: Maryland Historical Trust Press, 1998.
- Moore, Charles, ed. *The Improvement of the Park System of the District of Columbia*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1902.
- "Newlands Memorial Fountain," *The Evening Star*, 13 Oct. 1933, p. B 11-12.

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10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than one acre.

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	1 8 Zone	3 2 0 0 2 8 Eastng	4 3 1 5 2 3 5 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 Eve L. Barsoum, Historian
organization National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers date September 2006
street & number 444 North Capitol Street, N.W. telephone 202.354.1822
city or town Washington state D.C. zip code 20001

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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 U.S. Government, administered by the National Park Service, National Capital Region, Rock Creek Park
street & number 3545 Williamsburg Lane, N.W. telephone 202.895.6000
city or town Washington state D.C. zip code 20008

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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Verbal Boundary Description

The *Francis Griffith Newlands Memorial Fountain* is located in the center of Chevy Chase Circle (Reservation 335A) at the intersection of Connecticut Avenue and Western Avenue (the District-Maryland Boundary). The boundary of the object includes the land occupied by the fountain.

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the *Francis Griffith Newlands Memorial Fountain* has been historically associated with the object.