

Structures

Since the opening ceremonies in 1922, the Lincoln Memorial, dedicated to honor Abraham Lincoln, has been a symbol of the national capital and also a symbol of the reconciliation between North and South. It is the most important structural feature in the study area. Only a few structural changes have occurred since 1922, and these have been concentrated on the eastern face of the memorial. A series of steps and platforms, which make up the approachway, serve as the main entrance to the memorial. The approachway descends toward Lincoln Circle in a series of four platforms, each separated from the next by three granite steps. Each platform is a tripartite composition of a central area paved with granite, flanked by panels of smooth cobblestone, set in mortar bed, surrounded by granite block pavers. The bottom section consists of eight granite steps flanked on both sides by granite pedestals. The entire approachway system is supported by a concrete structure, pinned to bedrock.

Improvements were made to the approachway entrance in the 1970s, based on the Commission of Fine Arts approval. On the north and south sides, ramps, paved in exposed aggregate concrete, were installed to make the memorial more accessible for people unable to use the approachway steps. The ramps began at the outer granite pedestals at the inner circle sidewalk and continued behind the planting beds and turned 90 degrees to run parallel to the approachway along the outside edge of the yew hedges. They ended at the base of the raised terrace. The southeast entrance in the raised terrace wall led to an elevator and an exhibit space, as well as the restrooms. The northeast entrance was closed to the public.

Through the years the cobblestone panels have deteriorated, mostly due to freeze-thaw cycle. Park maintenance has responded by patching the deteriorated areas with a variety treatments. The unsightly appearance of this repair work for the cobblestone and safety concerns for visitors walking on the irregular surface, in addition to the structural problems, poor drainage, and lack of expansion joints, prompted the National Park Service to restore the entire approachway structure in 1995-1996. A few additions and alterations were made to the approachway area during this project. The cobblestone panels were removed and constructed in the same fashion as the original, with the exception that the stones were set to a greater depth in mortar to deter the



Figure 78 - Approachway and Lincoln Memorial, January 3, 1997. LINC 16-20.



Figure 79 - Reconfigured accessible ramp to Lincoln Memorial, July 23, 1996. LINC 10-7.

stones from dislodging. Also the ramps were redesigned to meet current accessibility standards according to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and provide a wider path for visitors. The new ramps have a more gentle slope (5%) and are 9 feet wide, 3 feet wider than the old ramps. As a result of the reduced slope of the ramps, the coping on the planting bed retaining walls needed to be raised 11 inches. Another course of granite and new granite coping (due to the deteriorated state of the original coping) were placed on top of the existing walls. The last change to the structure was the realignment of the ramps where they met the inner circle sidewalk. The previous ramps had a blind curve where the ramp and sidewalk came together. This situation was corrected to give visitors a clearer view when descending the ramp. Although the ramps are not historic, the National Park Service treated this area with the same respect for the historic fabric as they did for the main entrance steps by integrating the redesign of the ramp into the original approachway design. By using granite paving instead of exposed aggregate for the ramp surface, and by defining the edge of the ramps with granite coping, the ramps appear to be a part of the approachway.

The only other significant structure outside the Lincoln Circle is the Ericsson Memorial. This memorial is a granite statue designed to commemorate John Ericsson, the designer of the iron-clad warship *U.S.S. Monitor*, famous for its use during the Civil War. In 1926, a site was chosen for the Ericsson Memorial south of the Lincoln Memorial at the terminus of 23rd Street SW. The statue and granite platform were installed in 1927. The landscape around the base was completed in 1932 as part of the Arlington Memorial Bridge construction installation. Vehicular traffic circled around the statue where 23rd Street SW and the Ohio Drive met. The stones for the granite platform and steps leading up to the memorial have become dislodged overtime and are hazardous to visitors today.

Other structures outside of Lincoln Circle deal with visitor services. A concession stand was placed between the Reflecting Pool and French Drive in 1965. By 1992 two kiosks and a food concession trailer were located in this area. In 1993 the trailer was torn down and a new trailer



Figure 80 - Refreshment stand along French Drive, December 5, 1996. LINC 13-18.



Figure 81 - Gift shop kiosk along French Drive, January 3, 1997. LINC 16-25.

was placed on the west side of French Drive, because of the construction of Korean War Veterans Memorial in this section. A permanent location for the food and souvenir concession services has yet to be decided. In 1983 between the Reflecting Pool and Bacon Drive, the National Park Service placed an information kiosk to respond more effectively to questions about the newly constructed Vietnam Veterans Memorial. A similar type of information kiosk was constructed in 1996 for the Korean War Veterans Memorial at the southeast corner of French Drive and Lincoln Circle.

Several temporary structures associated with First Amendment rights are located along the northeast segment of the outer sidewalk of Lincoln Circle near the Reflecting Pool steps. The tents belong to groups selling t-shirts and other memorabilia in support of Vietnam War Veterans.



Another minor structure is a guard stand at the intersection of Independence Avenue, Ohio Drive, and 23rd Street SW. After the completion of Independence Avenue in the 1940s, the National Park Service placed this 5-foot by 5-foot structure to provide shelter for a traffic officer. The officers controlled the traffic light and setup barricades at this intersection to direct one-way traffic on the Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway during rush-hour. It is rarely used today. See Map 19 *Lincoln Memorial circle and radial roads - Structures* map for location of structural features.

Figure 82 - Guard Stand at the intersection of Independence Avenue and 23rd Street SW, December 5, 1996. LINC 13-8.

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| <p>Contributing Features</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lincoln Memorial 2. Approachway 3. Ericsson Memorial | <p>Noncontributing Features</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approachway ramp 2. Service and concession structures 3. Temporary structures for use by vendors 4. Guard stand |
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