

NATIONAL PARK SEMINARY, SWISS CHALET
(Walter Reed Medical Center Annex, Building No. 113)
2802 Woodstock Avenue
Silver Spring
Montgomery County
Maryland

HABS No. MD-1109-O

HABS
MD
16-SILSPR
20-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C St. NW
Washington, DC 20240

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Location: 2802 Woodstock Avenue; between the Japanese pagoda to the southeast and behind the ballroom and Senior House Annex.

Significance: The Swiss chalet was the home of the Zeta Eta Theta sorority.

The Swiss chalet was a common form of bungalow design.¹ The form appeared in A.J. Downing's *Architecture of Country Houses*, 1850, and it was reproduced in various guises at the Philadelphia and Chicago expositions. The NPS model is not a replica of any of these historic structures but rather simply a derivation of the popular style. Inspired by the rustic cottages of the Swiss Alps, the design was another form of romantic and exotic architecture that signified an idealized simple, country life. The style is characterized by intricate decorative detailing and cutout designs, and flower boxes.

History: The Swiss chalet was built in 1902. It was originally located on the south side of the driveway that ran behind the Senior House and the Science and Art building. (See campus plans) Ament moved the Swiss chalet to its present location next to the Japanese pagoda in 1919 when he constructed the new Main extensions. In its original location, the clubhouse was banked into a slope so the front entrance was on ground level. The new siting required the creation of set of steps to reach the front door. As with almost all of the clubhouses during Ament's years, the Swiss chalet was expanded. A one-story stone addition with a pent-roofed porch on top was built on the north side by 1919.

Description: The two-and-a-half story bungalow has a gable roof with deep overhanging eaves and an exposed stone foundation. The building faces to the east. It has tongue-and-grove vertical board siding. There is a stone chimney at the north end. The typical window is double-sash with diamond pattern above and single light below. The first floor is nearly surrounded by a wooden porch with decorative cutout balustrade. There is a wide center front door with a lattice-relief pattern wood surround. The upper half of the door has a window with diamond-pattern muntins. It is flanked by small casement windows with diamond-pattern lights.

¹ See the Campus Planning section in HABS No. MD-1109 for a description and analysis of the bungalow. Information regarding the Swiss chalet derived from Clay Lancaster, *The American Bungalow, 1880-1930* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1985) and Paul Duchscherer, *The Bungalow: America's Arts and Crafts Home* (New York: Penguin Books, 1995), pp. 69-73.

An oversized gabled wall dormer on the second story is decorated with scalloped barge board and overhanging eaves supported by large brackets. The second-story center door is flanked by windows with a matching diamond-pattern design. A band of lattice-work forms a frieze over the tripartite arrangement. A three-bay balcony with large decorative supports surrounds it.

On the north side of the structure, a stone foundation supports a first floor porch pavilion with a covered pyramidal roof that is held up by wooden posts with large decorative brackets. The porch connects to the Chateau causeway at its north end.

The wrap-around porch is located on only a portion of the west, or back, side of the chalet. The west facade's second floor has the same balcony and tripartite door and window pattern as the front of the building. Directly below the balcony is a first floor center tripartite window with a narrow diamond-pattern transom and a decorative lattice-work frieze above them. It is flanked by two double-sash one-over-one light windows. This window grouping is repeated on the ground floor. At the north end of the ground floor, there is a door that is covered by a bracketed shed-roof hood.

The south side of the building has another main entryway. It is surrounded by the wrap-around porch with an entry stairway in the middle. The door is similar to the one on the east facade. The second floor has a false balcony with paired windows with latticework above. There is a second-floor center door flanked by typical windows.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

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