

NATIONAL PARK SEMINARY, CHAPEL
(Walter Reed Medical Center Annex, Building No. 114)
Linden Lane
Silver Spring
Montgomery County
Maryland

HABS No. MD-1109-P

HABS
MD
16-SILSPR
2P.

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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National Park Seminary, Chapel (Walter Reed Medical Center Annex, Building No. 114)

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Location: Adjacent to Linden Lane, at south end of Main's west wing and just east of the Japanese bungalow clubhouse. The building faces north.

Significance: The chapel was one of the first buildings constructed on the campus. Its rustic, shingle-style form complimented the Queen Anne inn and the natural surroundings. The structure's bell tower, stained-glass windows, and shingled-siding were typical components of many Gothic Revival church buildings in the mid- to late nineteenth century. Like other quaint, picturesque architectural forms, the building embodied a romanticization of natural materials and distant cultures. The chapel at Woodstock, the late nineteenth-century Arts & Crafts colony located in New York State, had a similar rustic, wooden design.

History: The chapel was built between 1896 and 1898, making it one of the original NPS buildings and one of the oldest structures on the campus.¹ The building was attributed to T.F. Schneider in WRMCC's "Facility Condition Assessment," but this assertion is probably more conjecture than fact. No documentation connecting it to Schneider was found.

Between 1902 and 1913, the building (except for the bell tower) was covered in stucco, the east and west sides were extended, the front porch was enclosed, and the simple center stairway was replaced with a more ornate stone one that curved down to the east and has a stepped coping.

The chapel was used for religious services at the school. Before the construction of the Odeon theater in 1907, the building was not only used for daily spiritual services but also for lectures and non-religious ceremonial events.

Description: An octagonal-shaped building faces north. It has an exposed stone foundation. Its front facade has a large double-door covered by an overhanging pedimented roof that is shingle-faced with large brackets. The door is flanked by a shed-roofed extension that was once an open porch. Both sides of the extension have a semicircular tripartite stained-glass window with a recessed panel underneath it. The original central wooden stair was replaced by an ornate stone stairway that curves down to the east and has a stepped coping. Currently, the steps leading up to the chapel are missing and the balcony is nearly gone.

The chapel has a tall shingled bell tower with overhanging pyramidal roof and open bell cote, but no bell. There is a rose window at the bottom of the tower on the front facade. The west and east facades originally had gable ends. By 1913, the sides were extended to from hip-on-gable roofs

¹Its existence was not noted in the 1896 catalog but it was noted in the 1898 catalog.

with the two new walls coming together at point. A rectangular stained-glass window is located in each of the facades.

The south facade has a double entry door at west end with stone piers being all that is remaining of an entry porch. At east end, there is a round bay with seven tall stained glass windows. All of the stained-glass windows are covered with Lucite to protect them from vandals.

ADDENDUM TO:
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