

ABBAY MAUSOLEUM  
Carpenter Road  
Arlington  
Arlington County  
Virginia

HABS No. VA-1355

HABS  
VA  
7-ARL,  
14-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
National Park Service  
Northeast Region  
Philadelphia Support Office  
U.S. Custom House  
200 Chestnut Street  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106

HABS  
VA  
7-ARL,  
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ABBEY MAUSOLEUM

HABS NO. VA-1355

Location: Carpenter Road  
Arlington, Arlington County, Virginia

USGS Alexandria, VA-D.C.-MD Quadrangle  
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 18.320060.4304210

Significance: The Abbey Mausoleum is a Neo-Classical building constructed in 1924. In May 1996, the building was determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places because of its high artistic value under Criterion C.

Description: The Abbey Mausoleum is a one-story, rectangular building constructed of ashlar granite blocks from Georgia. The overall dimensions are 124' wide x 41' long. The building rests on a granite foundation and features a granite watertable. The building terminates in a hipped roof constructed of reinforced poured concrete sheathed in bituminous roofing material. A stained glass skylight is located on the east pitch of the roof. The front facade features a centrally located, projecting pedimented portico. The gable roof is supported by stone Tuscan columns set on stone pedestal bases. The front gable features a leaf-shaped antefix. The main entrance contains metal double doors with openings for stained glass panels and a transom above. The corners of the front facade feature projecting piers that contain cast-stone panels decorated with crosses. Cast stone panels decorated with wreaths are located on the front elevation. The interior of the building is constructed of white marble imported from Italy. Crypts line the walls and are stacked from the floor to the ceiling. An office and a reception room occupy the space in the projecting portico.

The building is structurally sound. Much of the stained glass has been removed or is in deteriorated condition. The building is surrounded by a lawn. A circular driveway is located in front of the building. The building overlooks Arlington National Cemetery on the east. Currently the mausoleum is accessed only by roads through Headquarters Battalion, Headquarters Marine Corps (Henderson Hall).

History: The Abbey Mausoleum was constructed in 1924 and was used as a mausoleum for human burials until 1960. The mausoleum was constructed by the Stone Mountain Granite Corporation of Atlanta, Georgia, and was designed to hold 594 crypt spaces and 60 cremation niches. Of the 594 crypt spaces, 444 were sold and approximately 331 crypts currently are occupied. Twenty-five of the 60 cremation niches are occupied.

The property was owned by Frederick J. Rice of Washington, D.C. and in 1924, the property was conveyed to the United States Mausoleum Company that dissolved four years later. In 1928, Stone Mountain Granite Corporation acquired the property at public auction and subsequently sold the property to businessmen from Washington, D.C., who formed the Abbey Mausoleum, Inc., of Arlington County, Virginia. The mausoleum was located near Arlington National Cemetery. Its prominent location attracted prominent families during the 1940s. George Sutherland, a U.S. Supreme Court justice who died in 1942, is reported to be buried there. During World War II, public access to the mausoleum was curtailed when the Henderson Hall Marine Corps Base was constructed in 1943 adjacent to the Pentagon. In 1957, The Abbey Mausoleum Inc., of Arlington County, Virginia abandoned the structure. In 1966, the Arlington County Circuit Court appointed a special executor to care for the mausoleum.

HABS recordation of the Abbey Mausoleum was undertaken to comply with a Memorandum of Agreement signed by the Virginia State Historic Preservation Officer and the Department of the Navy. The Abbey Mausoleum is subject to demolition as part of the Fiscal Year 1996 Authorization Act that allows the Navy to acquire the property in order to expand Headquarters Battalion, Headquarters Marine Corps (Henderson Hall).

Sources: Department of the Navy, Engineering Field Activity Chesapeake. Demolition Drawings.

The Environmental Company, Inc. *Phase I Environmental Assessment for Abbey Mausoleum, Arlington, County, Virginia*. Prepared for the Department of the Navy, Engineering Field Activity Chesapeake, May 1997.

Hong, Peter Y. "Vandalism in Va. Mausoleum said to Indicate Satanism" in the *Washington Post*, Thursday June 23, 1994, B5.

Historian: Geoffrey E. Melhuish, R. Christopher Goodwin & Associates, Inc., October 1997

# HENDERSON HALL

## LEGEND

BLDG#	FUNCTION
1	BATTALION HQ
11	BATHHOUSE/POOL
12	FACILITIES MAINT
21	ALL-HANDS CLUB
25	BEQ
26	MCX
27	GYM
28	WAREHOUSE
29	ADMINISTRATION
30	GYM ANNEX
S-134	RACQUETBALL COURT



