NPS Form 10-900 (Rev. 10-90)

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

MAR 1 6 1996

INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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 processor, or computer, to complete all items.

Name of Property			======
	Metropolitan Club		
·			
. Location			
street & number sity or town state District of Col	1700 H Street, N.W. Washington Lumbia code DC coun	not for publication of the publi	ion <u>N/A</u> ity <u>X</u> e <u>20006</u>
3. State/Federal Agency	y Certification		
as the designated author as amended, I hereby determination of eligib properties in the Nation and professional requir property X meets de that this property be compared to the compared of the compared	certify that this	Historic Preservation Act on a continuity of the	f 1986, st for stering cedural on, the commend e
State or Federal agency	and bureau		
In my opinion, the proporiteria. (See con	erty meets doo tinuation sheet for add:	es not meet the National Riitional comments.)	egister
Signature of commenting	or other official	Date	
State or Federal agency	and hureau		

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. National Park Service Certification		
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):	Patrick Andrus	4/28/95
	Signature of Keeper	Date of Action

object

Number of Resources within Property

Category of Property (Check only one box)

X building(s)

district
site

__ structure

 Contributing
 Noncontributing

 1
 buildings

 sites
 structures

 objects
 Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

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6. Function or Use	
Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions) Cat: SOCIAL Sub: Clubhouse	
Current Functions (Enter satessaries from instructions)	
Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions) Cat: SOCIAL Sub: Clubhouse	
7. Description Architectural Classification (Enter categories from ins 20th CENTURY REVIVAL Italian Renaissance	
Materials (Enter categories from instructions) foundation BRICK roof OTHER: Tar & Gravel	

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form

walls

other

BRICK

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

Limestone

8. Statement o			
	ional Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the fying the property for National Register listing)		
A	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.		
В	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.		
<u>x</u> C	Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction 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 has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.		
Criteria Consi	derations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)		
A	owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.		
В	removed from its original location.		
C	a birthplace or a 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.		
Areas of Signi	ficance (Enter categories from instructions) ARCHITECTURE		
Period of Sign	ificance <u>1908-1923</u>		
Significant Da	tes <u>1908</u> <u>1921-1923</u>		

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Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked	above)
Cultural Affiliation	
Architect/Builder Heins and LaFarge Frederick H. Brooke	
Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the signione or more continuation sheets.)	ficance of the property on
9. Major Bibliographical References	
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in or more continuation sheets.)	
Previous documentation on file (NPS) preliminary determination of individual listing requested. previously listed in the National Register previously determined eligible by the National R. designated a National Historic Landmark recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey recorded by Historic American Engineering Record Primary Location of Additional Data X State Historic Preservation Office Other State agency Federal agency Local government University	
Other Name of repository:	
10. Geographical Data Acreage of Property <u>less than one acre</u>	
UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a	continuation sheet)
Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting 1 18 323090 4307440 3 2 4 See continuation sheet.	Northing
Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundari continuation sheet.)	es of the property on a

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

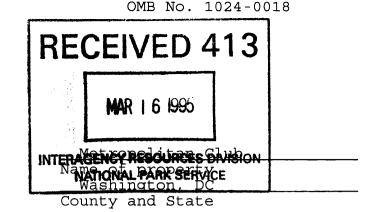
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11. Form Prepared By
name/titleEve_Lydia_Barsoum, Architectural Historian
organization <u>Historic Preservation Division</u> date <u>March 12, 1995</u>
street & number 614 H Street, NW Room 305 telephone (202) 727-7360
city or town Washington state DC zip code 20004
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 the SHPO or FPO.) name Metropolitan Club
street & number1700 H Street, N.W telephone
city or town <u>Washington</u> state <u>DC</u> zip code <u>20006</u>
Paperwork Reduction Act 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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The Metropolitan Club is situated at 1700 H Street, NW, at the southwest corner of H and 17th Streets, in the District of Columbia. Its location -- two blocks from the White House, U.S. Chamber of Commerce and Treasury Buildings, Old Executive Office Building, St. John's Episcopal Church, Decatur House, Renwick and Corcoran Galleries -- has always been a hub of governmental, The Metropolitan Club is a handsome institutional, and cultural activities. early-twentieth-century addition to this monumental environment. The building was constructed in 1906 by Hiens and LaFarge in the Beaux-Arts style on the site of the first Metropolitan Clubhouse (Gray & Page, 1883, destroyed by fire in 1904). The clubhouse has a rectangular footprint, nine bays long (H Street) and five bays wide (17th Street); its principal facade is on H Street. It is five stories high and its two main facades are organized in a tripartite arrangement. The facades are clad in buff brick and limestone. The formal, academically correct design includes bow-shape bays, porticoes, windows in the frieze and a balustrade. A two-story, three bay annex, designed by the firm of Donn and Deming (1921-23), with an addition by Bowie-Gridley (1986-88), is located to the west. story annex is setback and is constructed of complementary materials and detailing. The building is in excellent condition.

Exterior

The Metropolitan Club rests on a concrete foundation. The building is 112.5 feet wide by 90.83 feet deep. The limestone ashlar and buff brick walls are 68 feet high. The flat roof has wood beams with a tar and gravel surface; the original roof was tile and slag.

The north elevation along H Street is the principal facade. The original 1908 building is symmetrical. Its nine bays divide into three vertical sections with three-story-, three-bay-wide-, bow-shape-projections at the sides; a three-baywide, two-story annex was added to the west end in 1922-23. The entrance is at the center of the original block and is accentuated by a limestone portico. Its Doric piers, columns, and pilasters support a simple entablature, which only incorporates fascia and cyma recta mouldings, above which is a parapet crowned by an escutcheon draped with bountiful festoons. The shield features the superimposed letters "M" and "C." The first floor is emphasized as a base with its smooth-cut, banded limestone rustication. Its openings incorporate one-overone, wood sash windows without trim; the upper sashes are fixed. The piano nobile includes large un-equal sash windows which also have fixed upper sashes. These windows are enhanced by balusters resting on the sills and bent architrave mouldings with scrolls and keystones. The windows in the bow shape bays are separated by Doric pilasters which support a full entablature. The third floor window mouldings in the center bay incorporate brackets and cornices. The central window is surmounted by a shield. The third story windows of the bow-shape bays incorporate unadorned limestone sills and lintels which join limestone bands of trim which extend the width of the bay. The projecting bays are crowned by an

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entablature comprised of an architrave, which doubles as a continuous limestone lintel, a brick frieze, and a cornice with dentils. The fourth story windows have bent architrave mouldings with an oversize keystone. The building is crowned with an entablature comprised of a limestone architrave, a brick frieze punctured by windows without trim, and a cornice with dentils and brackets. The entablature is surmounted by a blaustrade which matches that of the piano nobile.

The 1921-23 annex is slightly stepped back from the western most (ninth) bay of the H Street facade. It is three bays wide and two stories high. The ground floor repeats the smooth rustication. Its left and center bay have windows while the right bay incorporates a simple portal. The windows on the annex's piano nobile have balusters rising from their sills and are separated by Doric pilasters which support an entablature. This addition was crowned by a baluster. In 1986-88, a two-story addition was added above the annex. The 1986 addition is set back from the H Street facade by the width of one bay of the original west facade. The addition contained squash courts which dictated an elevation without openings. The addition utilized reddish-orange brick which clearly separates itself from the original building and the 1921 annex. However, the squash court addition is enhanced and compatible with its use of limestone trim. Its central bay is emphasized by a bent architrave moulding. The addition is terminated by a limestone architrave and brick frieze which duplicates and aligns with that of the main block.

The Seventeenth Street facade is not symmetrical although its five stories repaeat the elements of the principal facade. The fifth bay incorporates a portico with Ionic piers and pilasters which support an entablatutre surmounted by a shield. The third and fourth bay incorporate the three-story-, bow-shape-, projecting-bay.

Interior

Like the exterior, the interiors are formal with restrained details. The original plan incorporated a central hall around which all rooms were oriented. In 1921, the, hall was extended to the west to accommodate the annex. At the ground level is a receiving foyer, a main lobby, two coat rooms, a card room, a grill room, a room honoring the past and present governors of the club, a barber shop, and several offices for the club management. The original plan called for a billiard room in the southeast corner (now the Members' Grill). In the northeast corner was the morning room (now the card room). In the northwestern corner of the plan was a sitting room (now the room honoring the governors). The most architecturally elaborate rooms are the lobby and the members' grill.

The lobby is a large rectangular space with a coffered ceiling, mosaic floor, marbleized piers with bracketed capitals, a large fireplace with a mixed marble surround at the west end, and grand central stair with an iron banister. There are two small passenger elevators on either side of the stair.

The Members' Grill, on the east side of the building facing 17th Street, underwent rehabilitation in 1988. Though a new ceiling was installed at that time, the

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original remains underneath. The original ceiling is broken into fifteen panels. Each of the panels has numerous light sockets which project from a decorative rosette. The marbleized baseboard moulding and the paneling are long time features, but do not appear to be original.

The parlor (now the Red Lounge) was located along the entire east side of the second floor. It is a large rectangular room divided by piers, capped with a leaf and medallion motif, and paneled sections which incorporate red flocked wallpaper. The space is accentuated with a coffered ceiling and two large marble fireplaces. Along the north side of the building was a reading and writing room (now a bar) and the Anderson reception room.

The library, located on the second floor of the 1921 annex, features floor-to-ceiling bookcases, separated by pilasters and crowned by a cornice with dentils. The vaulted ceiling has coffers framed by egg-and-dart and ogee moldings.

The original plan for the third floor called for the library to be located directly above the parlor of the second floor. In the front were game rooms and in the rear was the Board of Governors Room. For quite a long time however, this floor has served as sleeping quarters. In 1986, this floor received an exercise room, swimming pool, and two squash courts.

The fourth floor has always included the main dining room which extends the full depth of the building along 17th Street. The main dining room has a cove ceiling and is divided into three sections with two Doric columns which support an entablature. The front of the building incorporates three private dining rooms and the south side incorporates the main serving room and pantries.

The kitchen, refrigeration, storage and steward's quarters are on the fifth floor as originally designed. The basement was designed to accommodate numerous general and wine cellars, servants' lockers and toilets, the boiler and fan rooms, and heat stacks. The area continues to serve some of these functions as well as provide space for the offices of the building engineer and related maintenance departments.

In 1988, the club sold its rear lot and air rights. Subsequently, a building, 750 17th Street, was designed by the Washington firm of Keyes Condon Florence. The design incorporated an extension of the southwestern portion of the Metropolitan Club into 750 17th Street, NW. Although the alteration is not visible from the exterior, the clubhouse received additional space on each of its five floors.

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The Metropolitan Club, built in 1904, is a product of the American Renaissance. The clubhouse meets National Register Criteria C because it is a good example of the Renaissance Revival style an it is by the nationally prominent architectural firm of Heins and LaFarge. Secondarily, it represents the importance of the private social club at the turn-of-the-century.

Private Clubs

The establishment of the Metropolitan Club in 1863 was indicative of broader efforts to improve the social and intellectual atmosphere, as well as the physical appearance of the nation's capital in the mid-19th century. Beginning just before the Civil War, and coming into full fruition in the 1870s, large and often controversial expenditures were made to improve the physical character of the nations capital. These civic improvements were analogous to private efforts, in which individuals and groups attempted to cultivate the social, intellectual and cultural institutions of the city. For example, the Smithsonian Institution was established in 1846, W. W. Corcoran founded the city's first art museum in 1859, the National Geographic Society was founded in the 1880s. Moreover, a variety of men's literary, scientific, and social clubs were formed throughout the post-Civil War period.

Late-nineteenth-century private clubs in the United States played an important role in the social, intellectual, and political arenas. The Metropolitan Club, whose membership included distinguished political appointees as well as important businessmen, had a national role if only by virtue of association with individuals active in national politics and trade. As Lappin's Club Book of Washington, 1893 noted, the clubs of Washington, like those of London, Paris and New York in this era, were the outcome of an expanding, urbanizing civilization. With late nineteenth century national efforts to tackle social and civic issues, there arose the need for a "civilized" forum in which to meet persons concerned with reform. The club as an institution provided a private realm to discuss reform.

Private clubs also satisfied domestic and fraternal needs for its members. As Lappin summarized in the introduction of his book, "a good club is the next best place to a good home...eating, drinking and smoking are inseparable from the general aspect of club life....[and] so surely as man remains in the inheritance of free will and a spirit inclined to social intercourse, so surely shall clubland continue to spread and flourish even as a green Bay tree."

The Metropolitan Club's Founding

The Metropolitan Club began with a meeting of six officials of the U.S. Treasury on October 1, 1863. These men sought to organize the first literary and social club in the nation's capital. Twelve days later the club was formally established with forty-three members and a constitution which stated the club's intent to "promote social and literary intercourse and enjoyment among the members" who would not exceed 250 in number. The by-laws ratified during the club's first year

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included provisions for temporary membership in order to accommodate the transient nature of Washington's high-ranking political and military personnel. The distinguished first board of governors included John Lorimer Graham, a prominent New York attorney appointed by special assignment to the U.S. Treasury; J. Smith Homans, another appointed member of the Treasury; Samuel Yorke Atlee, who ran the Treasury library; Edward Jordon, Solicitor of the Treasury; Augustine Edwards and S.H. Kauffmann, both confidential clerks of the Treasury Secretary; Charles Knap, an insurance executive; George W. Riggs, creator of the Washington banking institution; Judge James Hughes of the United States Court of Claims; John G. Stephenson, the Librarian of Congress; George E. Baker, financial officer of the Department of State; Hugh McCullough, Comptroller of the Currency and later Secretary of the Treasury; Robert J. Atkinson and Charles M. Walker, respectively Third and Fourth Auditors of the Treasury; Spencer M. Clark, Treasury Engineer; and William Hemphill Jones, Chief Clerk of the Treasury Department.

In its second year of existence, the club began to accept out-of-town members which helped to develop its role as a national institution. The members included: Alexander W. Randall, onetime Postmaster General; Richard Wallach, mayor of Washington; George S. Gideon, president of the Board of Police Commissioners; Louis Chittenden, Register of the United States Treasury; J.C.G. Kennedy, director of the censuses; William B. Webb, Superintendent of Police; A.C. Richards, later successor of William Webb; Henry A. Wise, chief of naval ordnance; S.P. Brown, a prominent building contractor, councilman and civic leader; William J. Otto, Assistant Secretary of the Interior; Alexander "Boss" Shephard, the self appointed head of the Board of Public Works and later the the last Governor of the District of Columbia; Brigadier General C.C. Augur, Military Commandant of Washington; Surgeon General William A. Hammond; Senator Reverdy Johnson of Maryland; Judge James M. Wayne of the United States Supreme Court, Ward H. Lamon, marshall of the City of Washington; Maunsell B. Field, Deputy Assistant Treasurer; Joseph J. Lewis of the Internal Revenue Service; and B. B. French, Commissioner of Public Buildings in the Federal Government. All of these men had the use of the club for dining, socializing, and playing cards, and for keeping abreast of national and world news with the extensive subscriptions to newspapers and periodicals begun at the Club's inception.

The political upheaval which followed the Civil War led to a period of club dormancy between 1867 and 1872. The club was refound in 1872, with changes in its governing structure, dues, and location. However, the social and literary ideals of the organization remained the same. Other private men's clubs began forming by the mid-1870s, such as the Cosmos Club (1878), the Alibi Club (1884) and the University Club (1936). The Metropolitan Club is distinguished among the other clubs in the city as not only the first club, but also the first to construct its own purpose built clubhouse.

The Clubhouses

Many men's clubs began, and continue, operations within adapted residential structures. In its earliest years, the Metropolitan Club rented three different houses: the Ripley house (later the Wormley Hotel) at the southwest corner of

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15th and H Streets, NW (1863-67); the Griswold mansion at the southeast corner of 15th and H Streets, NW (1872-78); and the Morris residence at 1515 H Street, NW (1878-1883).

In the early 1880s, the Club sought to establish a permanent home for what had become a Washington institution. On June 25, 1883, the Club acquired title to lot A at the southwest corner of 17th and H Street from a John Baker and his wife. The parcel was purchased for \$10. The first purpose-built facility for the Metropolitan Club was constructed on the site of the present building, 1700 H Street, N.W., in 1883. The resulting Victorian styled building was a four-story masonry structure distinguished by projecting square and octagonal bays, numerous dormers, several large brick chimney stacks, and a corner tower with lunette windows. The building was severely damaged by fire in 1904 and subsequently demolished. Between 1905 and 1908 the Metropolitan Club relocated to rented space in the Sumner/Payne, Kennedy/Coleman and Pomeroy Houses, at 1519, 1521, and 1523 Throughout this period, plans for the reconstruction of a permanent clubhouse at the 1700 H Street site were being developed. By this time, the area had become one of the city's most fashionable neighborhoods. With close proximity to Washington's developing downtown, the White House, U.S. Treasury, and the surrounding upscale residential neighborhood, the facility, like its members, was at the center of Washington operations.

Given the social and locational significance of the Metropolitan Club, it is not surprising that each of the two facilities constructed by the membership reflected contemporary high styles in architecture. The 1883 clubhouse was a fine example of High Victorian eclecticism, similar to that seen in other prominent neighboring buildings such as the Corcoran Mansion (now the Renwick Gallery) at the northeast corner of 15th and Pennsylvania and the State War and Navy Building directly across Pennsylvania Avenue (now the Old Executive Office Building). By 1908, however, architectural ideals and tastes had changed significantly and showed a renewed interest in classicism. In Washington, in particular, there was specific interest in the revival of a classicized grand plan for the whole of the city, as envisioned by the McMillan Commission. These changes at national and local level resulted in a form and design for the new clubhouse which was specifically influenced by the architectural training being practiced at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts.

The design of the Metropolitan Club (1904) reflects the principles of the American Renaissance. In the foreword of <u>American Renaissance</u> Michael Botwinick summarized the ideology that prevailed at the turn-of-the-century, "It was the artistic community that elevated the sights of the period that informed the young culture that it was not some rough frontier society...that America was...unique..a new socity based on science, industry, commerce, rational order, democracy...and

¹ For a general overview of the American Renaissance see: Richard Guy Wilson, <u>The American Renaissance</u> 1876-1917. Brooklyn, NY: Pantheon Books, 1979.

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was the legitimate heir to the concept of the Renaissance." The conservative, i.e. Classical, art and architecture of the time which delighted in ornamental richness projected an image of culture and civilization. American artists, architects, politicians, financeers, and industrialists saw themselves as the heirs and final prodigy of the European Renaissance. Originally identifications were made between themselves and the leaders of the Italian Renaissance, but as time passed correlations were made with the French and English Renaissance of the sixteenth-through eighteenth-centuries and with the American leaders of the late-seventeenth- and eighteenth-centuries. In short, the use of the Italian Renaissance palazzo as the prototype for the Metropolitan Club represents a direct tie to the past.

The Metropolitan Club is a good example of the Renaissance Revival style. The symmetrical tripartite mass features a portico, rusticated base, piano nobile, windows with classical frames, a cornice with deep modillions, and a balustrade. However, the Metropolitqan Club is a fresh interpretation of the Renaissance Revival style with its use of bow-shape projections. Perhaps the architects sought to create associations with the Federal style buildings created in the new nation or the bays may have been incorporated to reference the "residential" function of the clubhouse. Regardless of the architects intent, the large proportions, imposing design, and lavish use of carved stone clearly establish this as a significant edifice.

The Metropolitan Club was designed by Heins and LaFarge of New York. The firm's secular designs include: the United States Naval Hospital in Brooklyn, New York; all stations of the New York Subway built for the Rapid Transit Commission; all buildings of the New York Zoological Park; Packard Memorial Library in Salt Lake City, Utah; the Morgan Building and Williams Memorial at Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut; the New York Genealogical Society Building; and the Chelsea-Moore Apartment House in New York City. The firm was known for their ecclesiastical designs. These include: The Church of the Blessed Sacrament in Providence, Rhode Island; St. Paul's in Rochester, New York; Church of the Good Shepherd in Shelton, Connecticut; Roman Catholic churches at Tuxedo and West Point, New York; the Chapel & Parish House of St. Michael's in Geneseo, New York; and the Fourth Presbyterian Church in New York City. Heins and Lafarge is probably best known for the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine in New York City, Their reputation for ecclesiastical designs undoubtedly led to their commission for Saint Matthew's Cathedral at 1725 Rhode Island Avenue, NW, 1893 ff. Saint Matthew's, located four blocks to the north of the Metropolitan Club, probably led to the latter commission.

In addition to their designs, both architects contributed to the general field of architecture. George Heins served as the Architect for the State of New York, appointed in 1889 by Theodore Roosevelt. Christopher Grant LaFarge was son of the famous painter and stained glass designer, John LaFarge, whose work included Boston's Trinity Church interior. C. Grant LaFarge worked with his father until the age of eighteen when he chose to pursue a career in architecture. His distinguished architectural designs are complemented by his role in the American

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Institute of Architects and his contributions as an educator at Columbia University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The 1921 annex on the west side of the clubhouse was designed by architect Frederick H. Brooke of the Washington firm of Donn and Deming. The firm designed the Masonic Temple and the Union Trust Building in downtown Washington. The two-story Metropolitan Club annex was designed to be in keeping with the scale, proportions and materials of the 1908 Heins and LaFarge building. A 1986 two-story vertical addition to the annex, also complementary to the historic qualities of the main building, was designed by the Washington, D.C. firm of Bowie/Gridley. This addition accommodates two squash courts above the second story of the 1923 annex.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property is located at 1700 H Street, N.W., Square 166, Lot 857, in Washington, D.C. The site is situated on the north-east corner of the square, facing north.

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Boundary Justification

The Metropolitan Club has historically been associated with Lot 857 in Square 166.