

INTRODUCTION

Stark Park lies on 30 acres along the Merrimack River in the north end of Manchester. Once the site of the Stark Family farm, the land became the resting place of General John Stark in 1822. The City purchased the land and gravesite in 1891, and hired a Boston landscape gardening firm to design its grounds. It opened in 1893, and along with Derryfield Park, became one of the first public parks in Manchester.



General Stark's gravesite dates to 1821 and the central obelisk, 1829. Postcard image courtesy of Richard Duckoff.

Stark Park's original design was an elegant one, with features typical of late-Victorian era parks built throughout America at the end of the 19th century. Serpentine roadways led carriages from the entrances, across lawns, through woodlands, past springs, and finally to the river and an "outlook." Visitors enjoyed long west-facing views to the river and hills. Fountains and summer-house provided visitors with spots to pause and rest, and ornamental trees and shrubs filled the park with color and texture. At the center stood the gravesite of General Stark, surrounded by shade trees and a field stone wall. Stark Park was one of the City's jewels.

Fiscal constraints during the middle and late 1900s led to neglect of the Stark Park landscape. Victorian features slowly disappeared, and woodlands grew out of control. Views to the river became obstructed, and much of the parkland, impenetrable. By 2000, much of the park had become unusable, and a group of concerned citizens took notice. In 2004 the Friends of Stark Park emerged, with a mission to restore the historic landscape. The first step in fulfilling the mission was the completion of the foregoing Preservation Master Plan.

Goals

The Friends of Stark Park established the following goals for the Preservation Master Plan:

- To develop an understanding of the park's history and the intentions of its original design;

- To identify contemporary and future needs for the park and its users, and make accommodations for them; and
- To prepare a plan document that records the park history, assesses its condition, and outlines specific recommendations for restoring the landscape.



The park's serpentine roadways lead visitors from the entrances along River Road westward, towards the Merrimack River. They were part of the original 1893 design, and endure to this day.

As a means of implementing these goals, the Friends developed the following program of improvements for the park:

Program

- The Plan should pay close attention to General John Stark, including placing emphasis on his gravesite, suggesting plantings that would be showy on John Stark Day (April 17th), and recommending that the State Legislature take more interest in his legacy.
- The Plan should include more places for people to gather, such as spots for croquet and picnicking, as well as family-oriented events.
- The Plan should pay close attention to the roadways and parking, as well as pedestrian circulation. The plan should consider restoration of the original granite edge stones, lining the roadways (still extant under pavement). The plan should address the abuse of the park by four-wheel drive vehicles that cut across the lawns (through signs or other means). Included in this should be considerations about lighting in the park.

- The Plan should include provisions for the Manchester Heritage Trail so that it may be used for cross-country skiing, biking and hiking.
- The Police Athletic League field should be maintained and woven into the landscape. Provisions should be made for a stable and grazing field and/or meadow for horses.
- The Plan should consider including many more flowering plants (trees, shrubs), as well as a garden (such as that in Prescott Park, Portsmouth), that could be maintained by volunteers, the Friends and possibly students, faculty and staff from the University of New Hampshire at Manchester.
- The existing flagpole, made of wood, needs replacing. Its location is good, but it needs lighting (increased visibility). The Plan should address this.
- The Plan should explore ways to restore the vase fountain, once located to the south and west of the Stark gravesite.
- Disposal of litter should be addressed, considering whether to place receptacles or not, and if placed, where and what style.
- The Plan should address overall security issues for General Stark's statue, and should include a recommendation about replacing the sword.
- The Plan should address signs, suggesting the types, sizes and placement of them. They should be tied into the growing arts culture in Manchester, and should include rules and regulations for using the park. John Stark should be emphasized on them.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT of STARK PARK

The origins of Stark Park date to the early 1800s, and the final years in the life of General John Stark. The land at the northern end of Manchester that would become a public park was the Stark Family farm, and in 1822, it became the General's gravesite. Thirteen years before he died, General Stark planted a maple tree near what would become his grave, and the tree endured through the 19th century. In 1829, the Stark family placed the Concord granite obelisk at his grave.



General Stark's plot, once standing alone in the midst of a farm field, became the centerpiece of Stark Park. Postcard courtesy of Richard Duckoff.

A group of Grand Army veterans began thinking about a park around Stark's grave as early as 1886, but it was not until the 1890s that the park became a reality. Two of General Stark's heirs deeded 30 acres to the City in 1891. They subjected the conveyances to (1) maintaining the land as a public park, (2) erecting not buildings on the premises except for those necessary for the park, and (3) expending at least \$300 per year on its upkeep. The heirs also asked that a long farm wall remain on the property, as well as General Stark's maple tree. The *Manchester Union Leader* described the parkland as offering "fine qualifications," including a "smooth and clean portion" (on the eastern end), a "fine grove" (on the north and northwestern portions), and three springs. The paper said, "a finer place for a park could not be imagined."

Historical records indicate that the Boston landscape gardening firm of Morton & Quimby prepared a design for the park in 1892, and the City highlighted the plan in its 1893 Annual Report. The design showed the Stark burial ground at the geographic center, with serpentine roadways weaving throughout. Other details included a bandstand, summerhouse, depot (at the railroad), and outlook (opposite the depot, on the river). Trees edged all sides, with the northern property line appearing the most wooded. A stone wall rimmed the Stark burial ground, giving it a dignified setting. Two sets of steps punctuated the wall on the burial ground's western side, allowing visitors a place to descend into the lower section of the park. The park's core contained few trees – only masses intended to emphasize the road and path system. The dedication took place on June 17th, 1893.



The Morton & Quimby plan called for a summerhouse to be built to the south of the Stark gravesite. At this spot, visitors could take in views of the Merrimack River and distant western hills. Postcard courtesy of Richard Duckoff.



Land for the park had been farmed and as a result, the landscape had few trees. Views were possible to the Merrimack River and hills to the west, and they became a feature of the park. Postcard courtesy of Richard Duckoff.

Several other significant features appeared in the park during its first decades. The City paved the roadways with Salem crushed stone, and lined each with granite edge stones. Benches, a vase fountain, and summerhouse, “playing fountains,” ornamental shrubs and trees were all added, some donated by private citizens. The naval cannonballs, with four Dahlgren cannons, came from the Charlestown (Massachusetts) naval shipyard. In 1897, the Grand Army veterans planted a colonnade of American elm trees along the north, east and south park borders. The thirteen trees on the east line represented the original thirteen states, beginning with New Hampshire on the southeast and ending with Georgia on the northeast corners. The Daughters of the American Revolution added more trees in 1904, when they planted sugar maples along the southern entrance and named the entry drive “Revolution Avenue.” In 1947, the City erected one of the Park’s most significant features, the John Stark statue.



The pyramids of cannonballs and Dahlgren cannons were placed in 1896. Postcard courtesy of Richard Duckoff.

As the 20th century progressed, funds for park maintenance diminished, and the landscape entered a period of decline. Vandals attacked the John Stark statue and removed the urns from General Stark's monument. The City stopped caring for the western half of the property, blocking access to the serpentine roads, and abandoning the springs and woodlands. By the end of the 20th century, many residents were not aware that the parkland extended to the river edge.



General Stark's statue, created by sculptor Richard Recchia, was placed in 1947. In the later part of the 20th century, it became the target of vandals.

This decline led to a concern for the park's future. Citizens continued to use the grounds for dog-walking, picnics, and other passive recreation activities, but felt unsafe in the overgrown areas. In 2004, a group of forward-thinking individuals joined forces to create the Friends of Stark Park, a grass-roots

organization dedicated to the landscape's long-term care. This Preservation Master Plan represents one of the Friends' first efforts to recapture the beauty of the Stark Park landscape and restore dignity to the burial place of one of America's most prominent Revolutionary War heroes.

LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

The following is an assessment of the existing landscape conditions at Stark Park. It includes an inventory of natural, functional and built features and an analysis of their condition. Finally, the assessment identifies the opportunities and constraints posed by the landscape, and makes preliminary recommendations for guiding the Preservation Master Plan.

Circulation

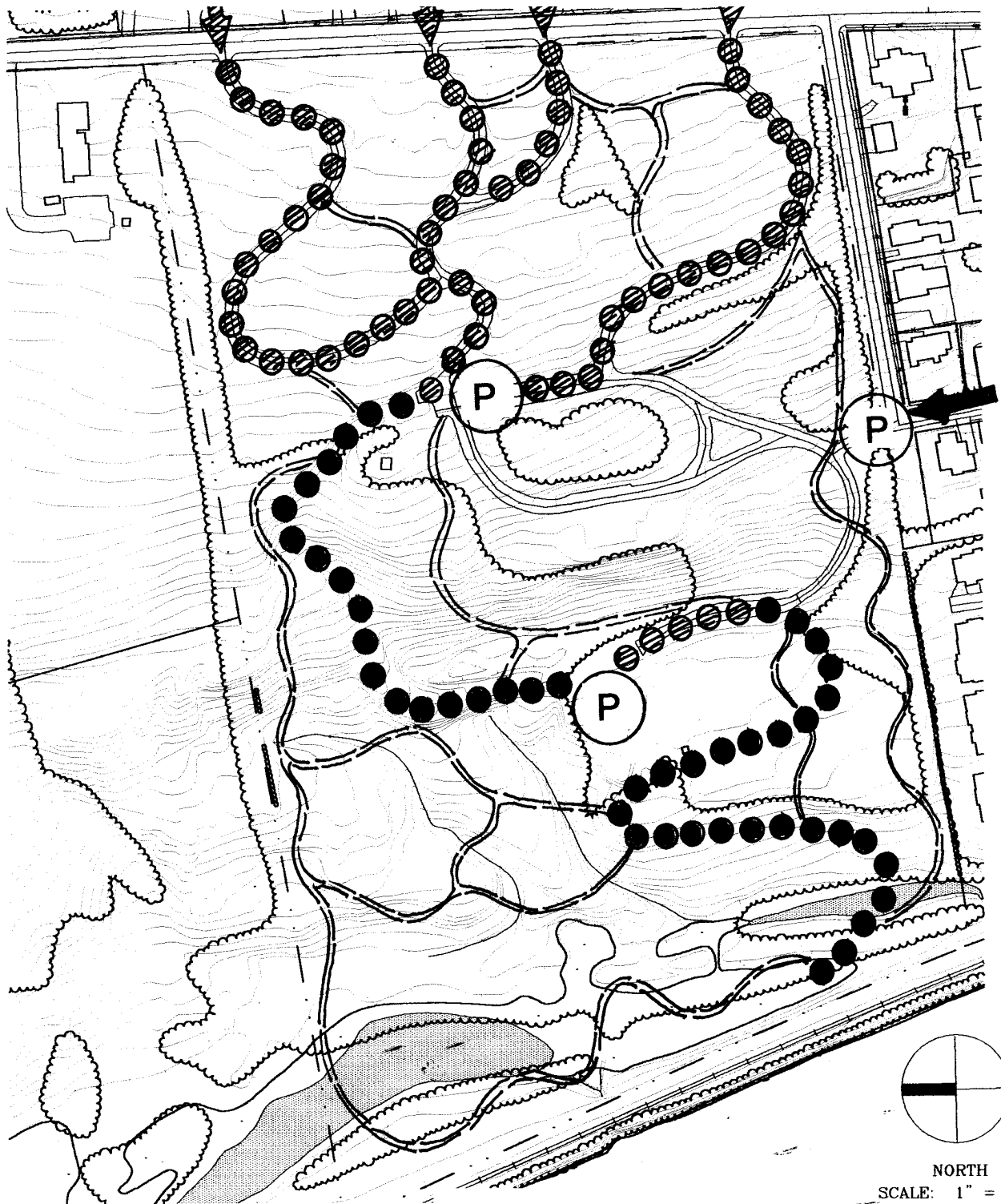
- The original vehicular entrances to the park off River Road have been retained.
- A new vehicular entrance has been added at the end of Park Avenue. This conflicts with the privacy of residents living along this quiet street. This new entrance appears to be the most popularly used.
- Approximately one-half of the original road network has been preserved – all in the eastern half (above the Stark burial ground) of the park. These roads are beautifully graded – graded below the lawns so that they appear invisible from River Road. The western roads have been eliminated, and the original pathways around the Stark burial ground have been turned into roads.
- All of the pedestrian paths have been eliminated. This includes a series of trails through the “Ramble” area at the northwestern corner of the park, as well as others between the River Road entrances and the Stark burial ground. Because of this, much of the parkland is inaccessible, and walkers compete with cars.
- Visitors park at the new entrance, and at spots along road shoulders where pavement is widest.

Views

- The many splendid views of the Merrimack River and distant hills (to the west) were some of the park’s most striking historic features. Many of these have been blocked by new growth of woodlands. Views have also been compromised by the loss of ornamental plant species – rhododendron and laurel – which added color and texture to the park.
- The contemporary housing along the south side of the park compromises views to the south from within the park. This housing should be screened by a dense, mixed deciduous and coniferous hedgerow.

Plant Communities







- Historic maps and photos of the park from c. 1900 depict a largely open landscape, dominated by lawns, clumps of deciduous and coniferous trees, and punctuated by masses of flowering shrubs and seasonal beds.
- The original designers appear to have retained many of the successional trees, including white birch and alders, and allowed them to mature into handsome masses.
- Today, dense, wooded areas (wet and dry) cover approximately one-half of the parkland. These areas cover the western half of the park. In the “Ramble” area, the woodlands contain understory, obscuring visibility through them
- The remainder is turf, dotted with shade trees and mature shrubs.



**STARK PARK
PRESERVATION MASTER PLAN
2005**

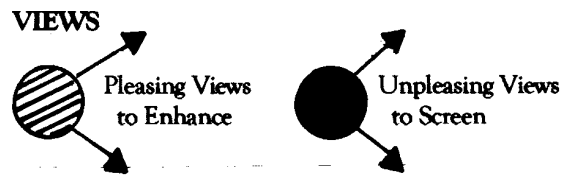
MARTHA LYON LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE, LLC

CIRCULATION

-  Historic Entrance
-  Modern Entrance
-  Historic Road Still in Use
-  Historic Road Abandoned
-  Historic Path Abandoned
-  Modern Parking Spot



**STARK PARK
PRESERVATION MASTER PLAN**
2005







MARTHA LYON LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE, LLC



**STARK PARK
PRESERVATION MASTER PLAN
2005**

PLANT COMMUNITIES

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------|---|--------------------|
|  | Lawn/Turf |  | Unmanaged Woodland |
|  | Successional Field |  | Forested Wetland |

MARTHA LYON LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE, LLC

Historic Features

Preliminary Recommendations

- The only remaining historic features include the eastern half of the roadway network and associated grading, Stark monument and burial ground, commemorative stone (GAR), and flagpole.
- Several modern features have been added, including additional roadways (around the Stark burial ground) and the athletic field.
- Many historic features have been removed. These include the GAR elm colonnade along River Street, the summerhouse (bandstand), burial ground wall and steps, roadway to the spring, “Ramble” pathways, foot bridge over the pond, rail depot, outlook, vase fountain, and roadway to the depot.
- Two springs, one under the “brow” of the Stark burial ground and the other in the “Ramble,” have been obscured by detritus and vegetative growth.

- The entrance off Park Avenue should be removed. This point, while convenient to the Police Athletic League field, disrupts the privacy of residents on Park Street. All vehicles should enter and exit via River Road.

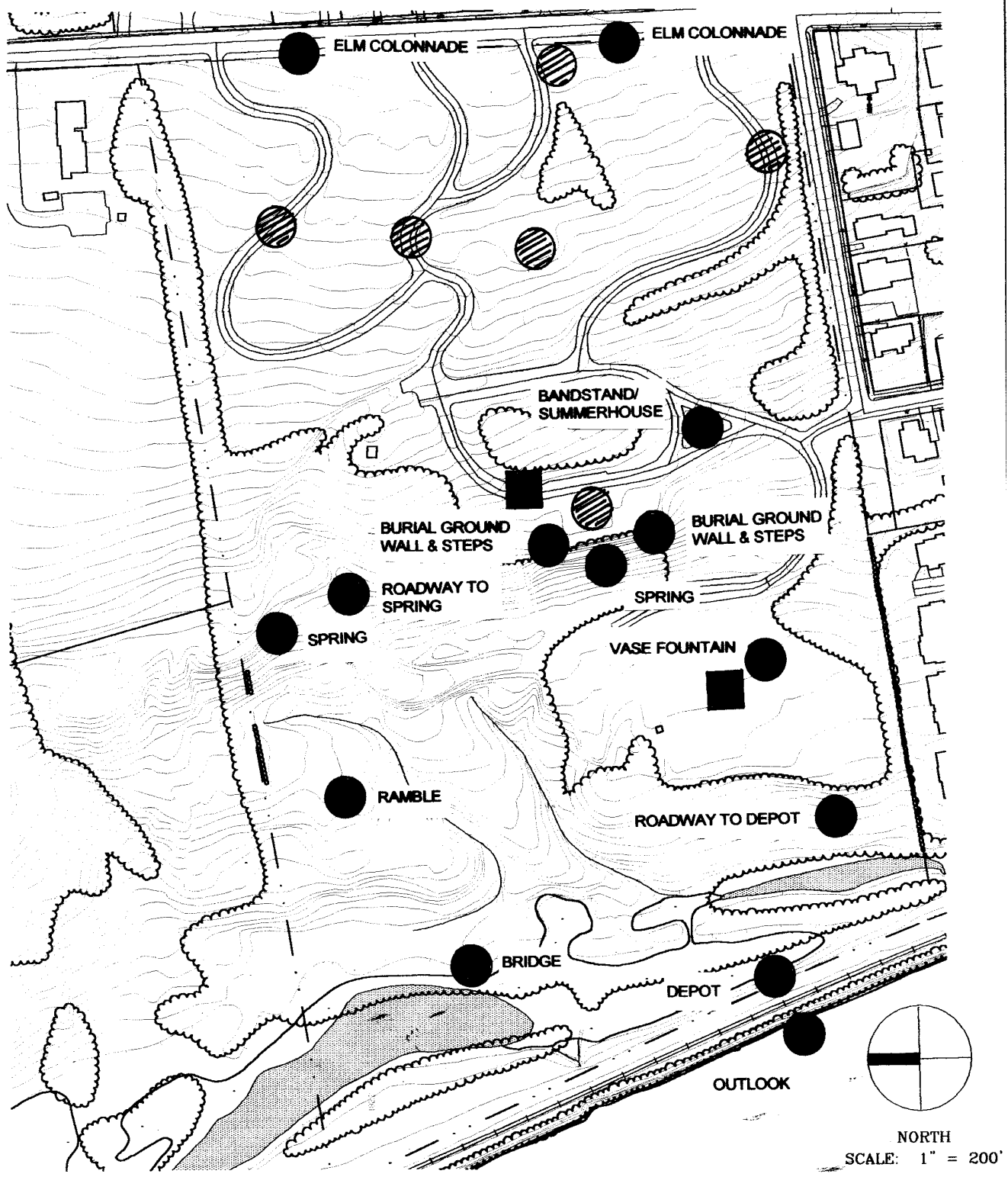
- The original vehicular and pedestrian networks should be restored, at least partially. A major reason why inappropriate activities are occurring in the park is the lack of circulation paths through wooded and remote areas. This is particularly true in the old spring area and closer to the river.

- The new roadways around the Stark burial ground are crowding this very important historic feature, and should be removed and replaced, where appropriate, by footpaths.

- A significant portion of the park woodlands should be cleared and grubbed and replaced with lawns. The woodlands are unmanaged and dense, and encourage inappropriate activities. Masses of trees should be maintained to emphasize the lovely road and pedestrian network. Such clearing will restore the valuable views of the river and hills to the west.




- The hedgerow along the park’s southwestern edge should be maintained and enhanced so that the contemporary housing is appropriately screened.

- The Friends and City should attempt to restore as many of the important historic features as possible. These will help draw more visitors to the park, making the landscape more visible, and discouraging inappropriate uses. These features, in order of importance, are:
 - the Stark burial ground environs
 - the original road network (to the depot and spring)
 - the elm colonnade along River Street
 - the pedestrian paths through the “Ramble”
 - the springs
 - the summerhouse/bandstand
 - the vase fountain
 - the pond and pedestrian bridge over the pond
 - the outlook



**STARK PARK
PRESERVATION MASTER PLAN
2005**

HISTORIC FEATURES

-  Extant Historic Feature
-  Missing Historic Feature
-  Modern Feature

MARTHA LYON LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE, LLC

- The Police Athletic League field should be retained and re-shaped to accommodate the original roadway network.
- A grazing field/meadow for horses should be incorporated into the cleared areas near the river.
- An irrigation system should be considered for the turf areas and planting beds.
- A park amenities, including signs, seating, trash receptacles, etc. should be employed to complement the landscape.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are specific recommendations for restoring the landscape of historic Stark Park. The Friends of Stark Park agreed that the master plan should strive, as much as possible to restore the landscape to its late 19th-early 20th century design. The recommendations reflect this thinking by proposing a series of projects that (1) preserve or restore existing historic features, and (2) reconstruct the many lost historic features. While most of the projects involve physical treatment of the landscape in specific geographic areas, several address park-wide concerns, such as caring for the trees, placing directional signs, and acquiring national recognition for the landscape.

Project 1: National Register Nomination

Stark Park was professionally designed in the Victorian style of the late 19th century. Its location within the City, meandering roadways, ornamental trees, and views all reflect this design philosophy. In addition, it contains the grave of John Stark, a nationally significant historical figure. Both of these factors make it an excellent candidate for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Inclusion on the Register will not only establish the park's prominence. It will also open up opportunities for financial support from local, state and national sources. Completing the nomination will include:

- Compiling research materials pertaining to the history of the park (written and illustrated documents, many of which were gathered as a part of this plan);
- Completing an "eligibility form" and submitting it to the New Hampshire Division for Historic Resources. Such a form serves as an official request to determine whether the park is eligible for listing. The NHDHR will review the form, make a site visit, and state the determination in writing;
- Providing the park is determined eligible, completing the National Register nomination form, including all narrative and graphic (sketch maps and photographs) sections;
- Holding a public meeting to review the nomination with citizens of Manchester. This forum will allow abutters and others to voice opinions and concerns about the nomination, and suggest amendments and/or improvements; and
- Submitting the nomination to the NHDHR for review, responding to any comments and resubmitting the final form.

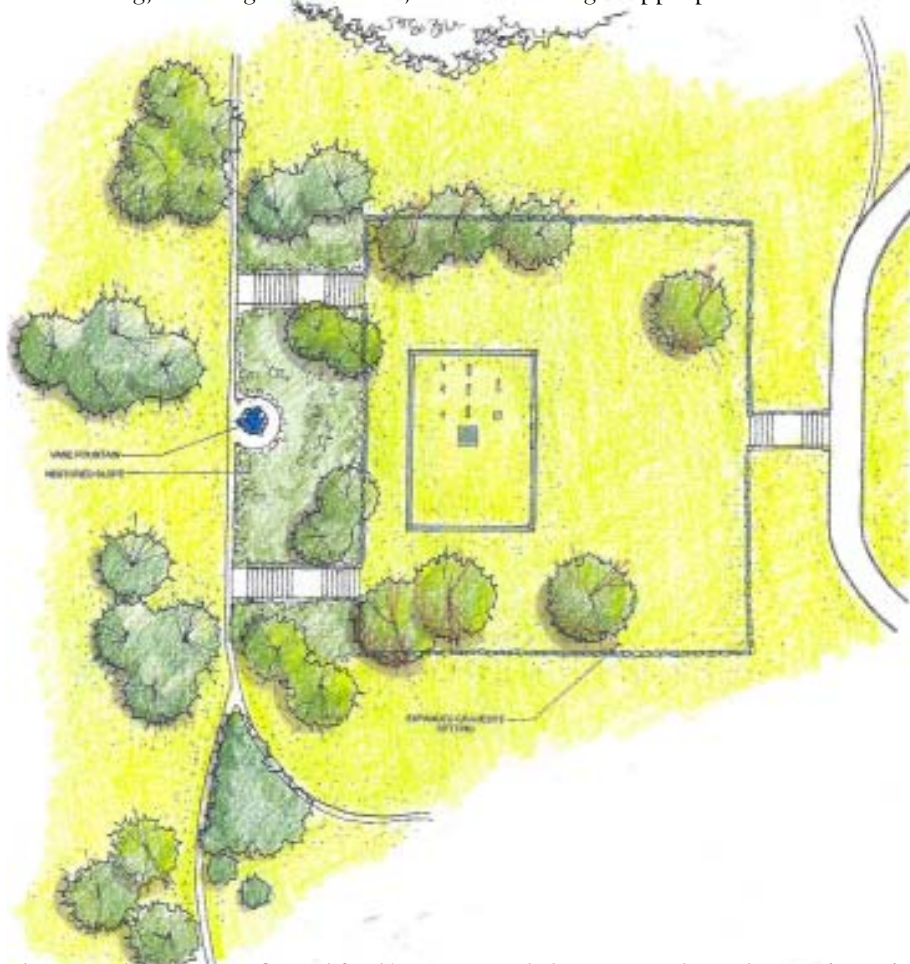
Project 2: Park Management Plan

A large concern of the Friends of Stark Park has been the lack of care for the park landscape over the past 75 years. Neglect has led to overgrown woodlands, abandoned roads and paths, damaged trees and shrubs, and vandalism around the Stark monument. A park management plan will provide specific instructions for tending the landscape both before and after it has been restored. It will include, at a minimum:

- A tree inventory and assessment, documenting the major trees, assessing their condition, and making recommendations for preserving and/or replacing them. The tree assessment will also instruct the City about thinning, pruning and removing trees to preserve views;
- Recommendations for additional plantings (other than trees) including shrubs and herbaceous perennials to be used around park feature areas, as

well as guidance about turf care. These plants will be selected from those that were popularly used in late 19th and early 20th century park landscapes;

- Recommendations for care of roadways and paths, including resurfacing, patching, and maintaining both chip seal and stone dust paths (see projects below); and
- Recommendations for addressing vandalism, including graffiti removal, littering, defacing monuments, and controlling inappropriate behavior.



Project 3: General Stark Gravesite

The proposal for restoring General Stark's gravesite includes removing the roadway in front of the grave, erecting a fieldstone wall, and restoring the slope and spring below the grave.

The most prominent and historically important landscape feature within park is General Stark's gravesite, located at the geographic center. Early plans for the park provided a comfortable setting for the plot, and connected it to the surrounding land with paths and steps. Over time, this setting has eroded, and the gravesite appears crowded against the overgrown woodlands. Project 3 will restore the Stark gravesite and its setting, including:

- Removing the entrance to the park at Park Avenue. This entrance was added in the mid-late 20th century and has resulted in significant erosion and misuse of the park landscape.
- Removing the roadway running in front of the Stark gravesite and introducing pedestrian paths, as appropriate. This roadway was also added in the mid-late 20th century and has compromised the gravesite's setting;

Project 4: General Stark Monument & Environs

- Clearing the unmanaged woodlands to the north and west of the gravesite to open views towards the Merrimack River. Significant trees in this area will be selectively retained;
- Restoring the slope below the gravesite;
- Reconstructing the walls and steps that once surrounded the gravesite;
- Introducing new plantings to the gravesite area as appeared in historic photographs;
- Replanting the original maple planted by General Stark in 1809; and
- Clearing the area around the spring (below the gravesite on the western side), re-establishing it as a park feature.

The eastern end of the park, from the River Road edge to the Stark gravesite, is the only section of the park that is currently maintained. Here, the original road network appears in the landscape and mature tree shade finely graded lawns. Over time, the city has paved over the original roadway and granite edge stones, removed original plantings of shrubs and beds of perennials and added new domestically scaled plants. As a result, the historic feel has been lost. By restoring these original features, the look of this popular section of the park will be greatly enhanced. Project 4 will include:

- Removing the several layers of bituminous paving, revealing the granite edge stones, and re-surfacing the roadway with chip seal;
- Removing the yews and other domestically-scaled shrubs;
- Introducing, where appropriate, new plantings of ornamental, shade and evergreen trees typical of the late 19th and early 20th century;
- Establishing one or two ornamental planting beds to be maintained by the Friends of Stark Park;
- Installing an irrigation system for the planting bed areas;
- Redesigning the setting for General Stark's monument, addressing vandalism and a replacement for the sword;
- Replacing and re-designing the setting for the flagpole;
- Introducing lighting along the roadways;
- Introducing signs to mark the roadways and provide directions to drivers;
- Re-establishing the network of pedestrian paths;
- Introducing a new, historically appropriate, and consistent style of bench; and
- Re-building the bandstand (summerhouse).

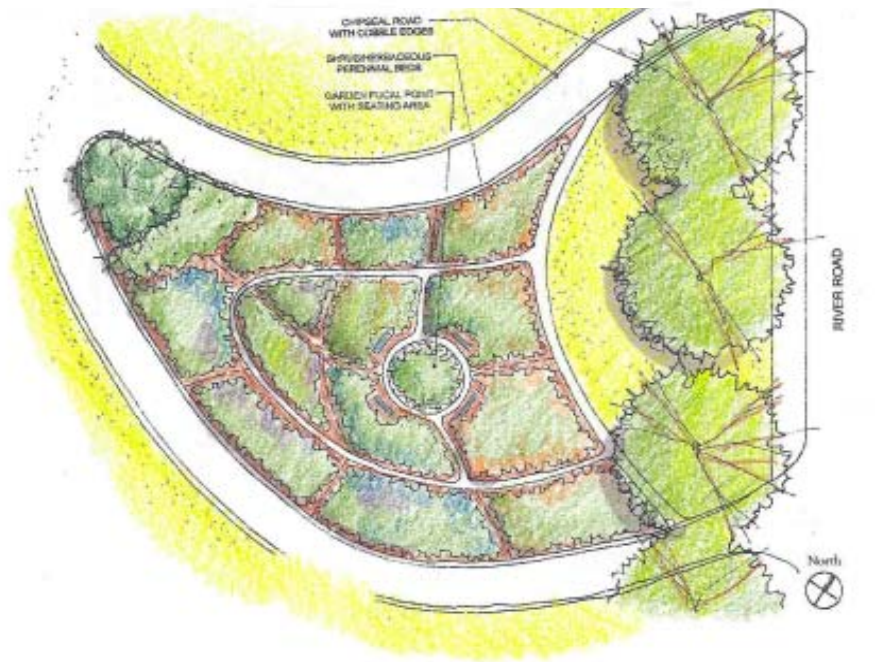
Project 5: Park Entrances & Edges

As noted in the landscape assessment portion of this plan, the park edges have suffered from a loss of trees, particularly along River Road.

- Replanting the colonnade of trees along the park edges established in 1897 by the GAR. These included 13 trees along the east edge (one for each of the original thirteen states), and 32 spread between the north and south edges (representing additional states). Include in the plantings metal tags identifying each tree and state it represents.
- Re-introducing the plantings of trees along either side of "Revolution Avenue," replacing those planted in 1904 by the DAR;
- Creating a "Friendship Garden," centered along River Road, where



The Grand Army of the Republic tree planting. One tree for each state in the Union will be planted along River Road, as well as the Park's north and south edges.



The Friendship Garden, proposed for the center of the Park, along River Road. A central monument, surrounded by seating, will honor the efforts of the Friends of Stark Park.

members of the Friends of Stark Park can contribute plants and volunteer maintenance time;

- Placing “welcome signs” at the entrances, identifying the park, explaining its history and importance to the City of Manchester (and State and

Nation), and outlining park rules and regulations. When status is achieved, include information about the park's listing on the National Register of Historic Places; and

- Placing benches along River Road for pedestrians to sit, rest, and enjoy views of the park (see bench style described in Project 4).

*Project 6: Park Loop Road**

One of the park's most appealing features, as noted in Project 4, is the meandering roadway. Still extant in the eastern section of the park, the roadway has been abandoned in the western half, making travel between the Stark gravesite and river nearly impossible. Grading for much of this roadway still exists, and Project 6 aims to restore it and features associated with it. The project includes:

- Clearing and grubbing the land in the southwestern portion of the park. High quality stands of trees will be selectively retained (per the outcome of the tree assessment in Project 2).
- Restoring the original roadway leading to the depot and spring. This road leads from the eastern half of the cemetery, around the north side of the Stark gravesite, and winds down the western slope towards the river. At its terminus is a cul-de-sac, allowing vehicles to circle around and travel back up the slope towards the park entrances. Chip seal will cover its surface, and granite will line its edges;
- Introducing lighting (matching that used in the eastern half of the park) to line and illuminate the roadway;
- Continuing to place signs (begun in Project 4) to mark the roadways and provide directions to drivers;
- Restoring the lawns stretching between curves in the roadway;
- Introducing new plantings (trees and shrubs) to punctuate the lawns and roadway (per the original plans for the park); and
- Restoring the vase fountain, originally located near the Police Athletic Field, below the Stark gravesite. This feature will be integrated into the design of the athletic field, described in Project 7.

**Note: The loop road layout may need to be modified from its original alignment to accommodate the dimensions of the Police Athletic Field, described in Project 7.*

Project 7: Athletic Field & Horse Meadow

The Manchester Police Athletic League has established a playing field below the Stark gravesite. It is because of this field that the city has continued to maintain (albeit minimally) the western half of the park. The police have asked that some of the parkland be reserved for stabling and grazing of their horses. The western half of the park provides ample space for such use, and if sensitively designed, will complement (and help restore) the historic landscape. Project 7 addresses the police's needs, including:

- Upgrading the existing athletic field and situating it within the alignment of the park loop road (see Project 6);
- Establishing reinforced turf areas for parking during athletic events (again, within the alignment of the loop road);
- Constructing a stable to house the horses; and
- Fencing an area for grazing.

The most overgrown portions of the park lie in the northwest and west sections. Here, dense woodlands have grown to cover the many original pedestrian paths that crossed these areas. “Rambles,” or areas containing winding paths through woodlands, were popular features in late-19th century American parks, and the northwest section of Stark Park contained a significant one. Project 8 will restore the “Ramble,” making it accessible to pedestrians and re-establishing it as an appealing park feature. Its restoration will include:

- Selectively removing and clearing trees and understory;
- Planting new woodland shrubs and groundcover;
- Reconstructing intricate pedestrian paths leading through the woodlands;
- Cleaning out and restoring the spring;
- Placing benches along the paths to accommodate pedestrians wanting to rest; and
- Introducing signs directing visitors to the spring and through the “Ramble.”

The final project involves restoration of the westernmost section of the park, along the Merrimack River. Once open to the water, the parkland is now set apart by a railroad embankment. Wetlands, likely created when the embankment was built, dominate the area, making it swampy and difficult to traverse. Project 9 involves amending the wetlands, providing access and circulation, as well as interpretive opportunities to visitors. It includes:

- Creating a system of pedestrian routes that combing boardwalks and bridges with at-grade paths;
- Selectively clearing woodlands to upgrade quality;
- Where appropriate, introducing new wetland species to improve diversity; and
- Introducing interpretive signs to inform visitors about wetland flora and fauna.

**Note: because Project 9 will impact the wetland, all work in this area must be reviewed and approved by the city’s conservation commission, as well as New Hampshire’s Department of Environmental Services.*

The following list assigns a preliminary cost to each of the preservation projects listed in the “Recommendations” section of this plan. Note that the cost figures are merely projections, intended as guidelines for the Friends of Stark Park and Manchester Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Commission in setting fundraising goals. As the City and Friends undertake projects and more detailed design becomes available, they should revise the numbers accordingly.

Project 8: Ramble

Project 9: River Front*

Costs

<i>Project 1: National Register Nomination</i>		
Research, photography, compilation of nomination for the NHDHR	\$ 7,500	
Total		\$ 7,500
<i>Project 2: Park Management Plan</i>		
Tree Inventory & Assessment	\$ 10,000	
Care Recommendations	\$ 5,000	
Total		\$ 15,000
<i>Project 3: General Stark Gravesite</i>		
Remove Park Avenue Entrance	\$ 2,000	
Clearing, Grubbing & Seeding	\$ 10,000	
Slope Restoration	\$ 10,000	
Walls & Steps	\$100,000	
Plantings	\$ 20,000	
Vase Fountain	\$ 20,000	
Design & Engineering	\$ 30,000	
Total		\$192,000
<i>Project 4: General Stark Monument & Environs</i>		
Roadways & Gutters	\$200,000	
Plant Removal	\$ 5,000	
Plantings	\$ 25,000	
Irrigation	\$ 5,000	
Monument Setting	\$ 10,000	
Flagpole	\$ 5,000	
Lighting	\$ 50,000	
Sign Program	\$ 10,000	
Pedestrian Paths	\$ 12,000	
Benches	\$ 8,000	
Bandstand	\$ 50,000	
Design & Engineering	\$ 60,000	
Total		\$440,000
<i>Project 5: Park Entrances & Edges</i>		
Clearing & Grubbing	\$ 5,000	
Perimeter Stone Wall	\$100,000	
Replanting/Tagging Trees	\$100,000	
Welcome Signs	\$ 5,000	
Benches	\$ 8,000	
Design & Engineering	\$ 10,000	
Total		\$228,000

<i>Project 6: Park Loop Road</i>		
Clearing & Grubbing	\$ 10,000	
Roadways & Gutters	\$200,000	
Lighting	\$ 25,000	
Signs	\$ 5,000	
Design & Engineering	\$ 30,000	
Total		\$270,000
<i>Project 7: Athletic Field & Horse Meadow*</i>		
Re-aligning & Resurfacing Field	\$ 25,000	
Reinforced Turf Parking	\$100,000	
Clearing & Grubbing for Meadow	\$ 10,000	
Fencing for Paddock	\$ 28,000	
Design & Engineering	\$ 20,000	
Total		\$183,000
<i>*Projection does not include cost of stable</i>		
<i>Project 8: Ramble</i>		
Clearing & Grubbing for Path & Spring	\$ 5,000	
Paths & Boardwalks	\$ 75,000	
Benches	\$ 10,000	
Signs	\$ 1,000	
Design & Engineering	\$ 10,000	
Total		\$ 101,000
<i>Project 9: River Front</i>		
Selective Clearing	\$ 10,000	
Paths & Boardwalks	\$ 75,000	
Wetland Plantings	\$ 10,000	
Signs	\$ 1,000	
Design & Engineering	\$101,000	
Total		\$ 106,000

**APPENDIX A: HISTORICAL
CHRONOLOGY**

1809	General John Stark planted a maple near what would become his final resting place.
1822	General John Stark died and was interred at his family farm, on a bluff located half-way from the roadway (River Road) and Merrimack River.
1829	The granite obelisk bearing Stark's name was erected in the Stark burying ground by the General's family members. It was of Concord granite and was hewed and fashioned by the inmates of the state prison at Concord.
1876	Elizabeth Stark and Augustus Stark gave the City about two acres on which the Stark burying ground was located. The legal description of the land referred to the parcel as Monument Square. It was conveyed upon the City continuing to secure the premises with a fence and beautifying it from time to time.
1878	"Monument Square" appeared in the City Engineering office's survey book, recording the dimensions of the monument's setting. Newsclips in scrapbooks at the Carpenter Library refer to the "Ellis & Patterson plan," which was accepted by the City and called for a 350' x 250' rectangle around Stark's gravesite.
1886	Several Grand Army veterans generated the idea of purchasing the grounds around Stark's burial place for use as a public park emerged on Memorial Day.
1887	A plan was made showing the location of "Monument Square."
1889	In May, a group of veterans and Manchester citizens was appointed to formulate plans to secure thirty acres to be used as a public park.
1890	The 1889 committee presented a petition, signed by many representative citizens, requesting that the City purchase the thirty acres. The City government adopted the petition unanimously. Also in 1890, a plan for Derryfield Park was presented to the City. The designer of record was Winifred Bennett, City Engineer.
1891	On January 3 rd , two deeds valued at \$4,000 a piece were conveyed to the City by two of General John Stark's heirs - Ms. Lizzie Stark and her brother, Augustus H. Stark (great-granddaughter and great-grandson of the General). These constituted the acreage for the park, as well as the General Stark gravesite. The conveyances were subject to: (1) the City maintaining the land as a public park, (2) the City erecting no

buildings on the premises except such as may be appropriate or necessary for the use of said park, and (3) the City expending at least \$300 on the average for the care and improvement of the park each year.

The land reportedly contained many historically significant features. A stone wall, believed to have been constructed by some of General Stark's soldiers, ran from one end of the property to another, on the west side of River Road. Miss Elizabeth Stark asked that the wall remain, as well as "the large maple tree which stands on the west side of the road nearly opposite the old house," a tree that was set out by the general (in 1809), and was "but a sapling when he died."

On August 6th, *The Manchester Union Leader* described the park land as offering "fine qualifications." The easterly portion was as smooth and clean a piece of land as there was in the State of New Hampshire. In the north and northwestern portion was a fine grove, which could be made very attractive at little expense. Three springs ran from the "base of the brow where the graves are," and the water was reportedly "sparkling and pure." The paper noted that it would be "a very easy matter to make an artificial pond." It also said, "a finer place for a park could not be imagined."

Joseph B. Sawyer, C. E. was employed to make a survey of Stark Park. Levels were taken by the City Engineer's office and a contour map was prepared locating trees. Many of the trees were alders and birches, indicating that the land was a former agricultural field, in the throes of succession (the survey, located in the Manchester Highway Department office, is dated 1892). The map was then sent to William Doogue, superintendent of public parks in Boston. The City Report stated that Mr. Doogue's office was to prepare a plan, showing proposed walks and drives. In the meantime, the City Engineer's office directed removal of underbrush from the Stark Park property.

Again, on August 6th, *The Manchester Union Leader* reported that the Mayor and "committee on commons" were to receive Mr. Doogue (one of the finest landscape gardeners in the country) and two competent engineers to view the old Stark farm on North River Road.

1892

The City paid \$1,000 for a design of the park made by the office of Morton & Quimby, landscape gardeners of Boston. The plan, which appeared in the 1893 City Report, showed the Stark burial ground at the geographic center of the park, with serpentine roadways weaving throughout. Other details included a band stand, summer house, depot (at the railroad) and outlook (opposite the depot, on the river). Trees edged all

sides of the park, although the northern edge appeared the most wooded. A stone wall rimmed the Stark burial ground, giving it a dignified setting. Two sets of steps punctuated the wall on the western side of the burial ground, allowing visitors a place to descend into the lower section of the park. Remarkably, the core of the park contained few trees – only masses intended to emphasize the road and path system.

1893 On June 17th, the City dedicated the Park. The City Report of this year contained the first report of the “Street and Park Commission.” In it, the commissioners described the park as having well-prepared roadbeds with sand foundations, crushed stone top courses, secured by a Salem stone dust binder course. 1,035 feet of paved gutters lined the roadways, each 18 inches in width. The total width of each roadway (with gutters) was 19 feet. A spring on the grounds was cleaned, and 150 rhododendrons set out in “the grove.” 100 mountain laurel plants were placed, lawns graded, rolled and sown, and flower beds set.

1894 The City made improvements, including extending and paving roadways. Workers also removed the wall on the north side.

c. 1895 An article appeared providing detail about the look of and improvements made to the park. Since the land had been purchased, the City had expended \$250 annually to upgrade the property. Much of the land in the eastern section was cleared and grubbed, and beautiful, winding macadam roadways had been completed per the specifications of the City Engineer. Salem crushed stone was used for the paving, provided by the Massachusetts Broken Stone Company of Boston. Trees and shrubs had been set out on the north, south and east edges, as well as in some central sections. Four hundred feet of sewer/under drain had been placed between River Road and the Stark burial ground, and the center of the park graded and seeded. Many benches had been placed and a vase fountain, six feet high and six feet in diameter, had been give to the City by a private citizen. A summerhouse was erected in the southeastern section near the Stark burial ground (in honor of Commissioner George Stearns). Several donors had given trees, adding shade to the north and south borders and Stark burial ground. A grove of trees stood at the park’s western terminus along the Merrimack River. A series of winding drives, ornamented with shrubbery and “playing fountains” made for a pleasing ride down to the river.

1896 Four naval cannonballs from the War of 1812 were placed near the eastern end of the Park, along with four Dahlgren cannons. These were secured from the Charlestown, Mass.

Navy Yard when William C. Clarke was mayor, and “form[ed] a very picturesque feature of the landscape.” Also this year a tool house was built, and curbing was added to the Stark burial ground.

- 1897 On July 6th, the Grand Army veterans of Manchester presented the City with a “magnificent colonnade of native American elm trees” and memorial tablet to be added to the park. The 45 trees were laid out by Comrade E. P. Richardson and extend the one-half mile around the park’s borders. Each tree represented one of the 45 states of the Union. They were set apart 50 feet, and placed 25 feet inside the park border. The 13 trees on the east line represented the original thirteen states – beginning with New Hampshire on the southeast and ending with Georgia on the northeast corners. Lines of trees on the north and south sides represented newer states, and were added in the order they became part of the Union. Each tree held a metal tag engraved with the name and date of each admission.
- 1899 The City raised hay in the park, and cut it for the City stables. The City Report indicated that a building needed to be erected to store the hay (in both Stark and Derryfield Parks).
- 1902 A survey showing roads within the park was prepared. The Stark burial ground appeared, and the iron fence had been placed around it. The City Report stated that the road circling the Stark burial ground was completed. The City Engineering office prepared a survey of the elm trees planted in 1897.
- 1903 The City added 1600 feet of cobble gutters alongside the park roads, and repaired roadways.
- 1904 The main road leading into Stark Park was named “Revolution Avenue” in honor of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and trees were planted along both sides. The City maintained flower beds.
- 1905 A new wooden bridge was built over the brook in the lower portion of the park. Fifty to 80 rose shrubs were planted.
- 1908 A footbridge was repaired, stonedust walks laid, and planting beds established.
- 1909 The City continued to maintain planting beds and replaced trees as needed.
- c.1910 A series of postcards were drawn and printed depicting the park and its many features. The park landscape was open,

	with many views of the river and distant hills. Trees grew in clumps, and many appeared to be white birches. One image depicted the “Road to Spring,” located on the northern edge of the park, in the woodlands. The woodlands contained no understory. The summerhouse was a wooden, gable-roofed structure, open on all sides. The door to the summerhouse faced the Stark burial ground. Plantings of shrubs accented the curves in the roadways.
1913	A drawing of the Stark burial ground fence was prepared, with a detail plan for the posts.
1914	Miss Elizabeth Stark, the last remaining family member, died.
c. 1915	An article entitled <i>Resting Place of Revolutionary War Hero is a Beautiful Spot</i> appeared. In it, the author described the view from the Park as “one of the most entrancing to be found anywhere in this part of New Hampshire.” Also in 1915, funds were appropriated to bring water into the park.
1927	The City Report made first mention of vandalism in the park, noting the need for park police. Also in this year, loam within the park was removed for use in other City parks.
1930	A 50’ steel flagpole was added, replacing the old wooden one.
1947	Governor Charles H. Bartlett gifted the City funds to erect the John Stark statue to be placed in Stark Park. The City held a competition, and the winner, sculptor Richard Recchia of Rockport, Massachusetts received \$12,000 to create the piece. It took Recchia 2-1/2 years to complete the statue.
1970	The September 27 issue of the New Hampshire Sunday News reported that the sword atop General Stark’s statue had been hurt by vandals.
1980	Funding was provided for two, lighted tennis courts and related parking at the park.
1983	<i>The Manchester Union Leader</i> reported that the urns atop General Stark’s monument were missing. Someone had jumped the 6’ fence surrounding the monument and stolen the 100-pound object.
1990s	The Heritage Trail effort began, and planned for a spur through Stark Park.
2001	<i>The Manchester Union Leader</i> reported, on August 21 st , that large boulders had been placed across the North River Road entrance to the Park to prevent vehicular entry and “use by homosexual men.”

2004 The Friends of Stark Park formed out of concern for the park's long term use and care, and the City appropriated funds to prepare a preservation master plan for the park.

**APPENDIX B:
BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Maps, Surveys & Plans

(Arranged by date)

1878. City of Manchester Highway Department: survey of Monument Square showing dimensions of setting for the General Stark monument.
1887. Bennett, Winfred H., City Engineer, Plan showing location of Monument Square as described in the accompanying deed. July 7, 1887 (City of Manchester Highway Department).
1892. City of Manchester Highway Department: survey locating trees on existing Stark Park property.
- c. 1893. Morton & Quimby, landscape gardeners of Boston, Stark Park, scale 40 feet = 1 inch.
1902. City of Manchester Highway Department: survey showing roads and Stark burial ground surrounded by an iron fence.
1902. City of Manchester Highway Department: Location of Trees Around Stark Park (survey of trees in Stark Park along River Road and Park Avenue), December 22, 1902.
1913. Lord, Samuel J., City Engineer, Fence for Stark Burial Ground, Stark Park, Manchester, NH and Detail Plan of Post for Fence Around Stark Burial Lot, Stark Park, Manchester, NH. October 17, 1913 (City of Manchester Highway Department).
1946. Engineer's Department, Manchester, NH, Plan of Site for Major General John Stark Monument, Stark Park, Manchester, NH, scale 1 inch = 20 feet, February 1946.

Books & Documents

City of Manchester, Annual City Reports, 1890-1930.

Bartlett, General Charles H., Oration, Dedication of Stark Park, the City of Manchester, New Hampshire. June 17, 1893.

Newspaper Articles & Clippings

(Arranged by date)

“General Stark’s Burial Place.” Publication and author unknown, January 11, 1876.

“Historic Ground. Land That Will Be Inspected Today by Boston Officers.” The Manchester Union Leader, August 6, 1891.

“Historic Stark Park. National Colonnade of Memorial Trees Presented to the City.” Manchester Daily Mirror & American, July 7, 1897.

“Around Stark’s Grave.” Publication and author unknown, 1898.

“Stark Holds Symbol of Freedom High.” New Hampshire Sunday News, September 27, 1970.

“Stark Park Project Funded.” Publication and author unknown, November 20, 1980.

“General Stark Memorial ‘Urns’ Reputation for Wanderlust.” The Manchester Union Leader, March 24, 1983.

“Friends of Stark Park Meets.” Hippo Press, October 6, 2004.

“Resting Place of Revolutionary Hero is a Beautiful Spot.” Publication, author and date unknown.