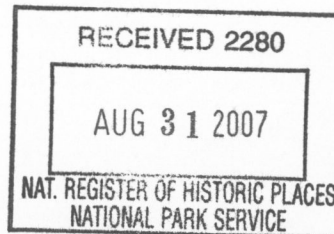


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



1057

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 process, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Guglielmo Marconi Memorial

other names _____

2. Location

street & number Reservation 309A, 16th and Lamont Sts., N.W.

☐ not for publication

city or town Washington

☐ vicinity

state D.C. code DC county n/a code 001 zip 20010

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☒ nationally ☐ statewide ☐ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments).

Joe Wallis Acting F.P.O.
Signature of certifying office/Title

8/28/07
Date

National Park Service
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments).

DAVID MALONEY, ACTING SHPO
Signature of certifying office/Title

2-27-2007
Date

DC HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

I hereby, certify that this property is:

☒ 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): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Patricia Andrews

10/12/2007

Guglielmo Marconi Memorial
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☐ Private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☒ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- ☐ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☒ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
		buildings
		sites
		structures
1		objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Memorials in Washington, D.C.

**number of contributing resource previously
listed in the National Register**

0

6. Function of Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION and CULTURE: work of art

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION and CULTURE: outdoor recreation

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Academic Abstraction

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation

walls

roof

other

Granite, bronze, gold

Narrative Description

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

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Guglielmo Marconi Memorial

Name of Property

Washington, DC

County and State

Section 7 Page 2

DESCRIPTION

The *Guglielmo Marconi Memorial* is the focal point of Reservation 309A, located in front of the Mount Pleasant Branch Public Library at the intersection of 16th and Lamont Streets, N.W. The gilded bronze and granite monument employs Academic Abstraction design elements, using Art Moderne stylistic details that were popular during the 1930s.

The monument incorporates a series of pink granite rectilinear masses. The lowest component incorporates two steps leading to a broad platform. A narrow central pedestal bears a gilded bronze portrait bust of Guglielmo Marconi. As rendered, the head invokes a sense of seriousness and determination. Behind this pedestal, stands a tall and broad granite slab flanked by two low knee-walls. The broad slab supports a gilded bronze sculpture comprised of electrical waves disappearing into clouds set beneath an emerging world. Atop the world sits a dynamic nude female with her left arm extending forward and her right arm bent and pointing upward. The figure's arms, the drapery around her legs blowing behind, and her wavy mass of stylized hair extending outward from her head, echo the electrical waves below and emphasize the concepts of speed and dynamism. The bronze sculptures were re-gilded in September 2006.¹

The monument is sited at the northern end of the reservation, angled in such a way that it is quite noticeable from the northbound traffic lanes of 16th Street. The landscape plan for the area is predominantly turf with evergreen hedges around the monument and along the western access road. The rectilinear hedges echo the granite blocks of the memorial.

¹ At the annual Society of Gilders (founded 1987) meeting, the participants partake in a community-based project. In 2006, the society met in Washington, D.C. and the selected the *Marconi Memorial* as their project. More than twenty-five gilders worked on the preparation and gilding of the two sculptures.

8. Statement of Significance**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☐ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or 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 as yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or 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.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

Area of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Art

Period of Significance

1941

Significant Dates**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

Attilio Piccirilli

Joseph Freedlander

9. Major Bibliographical References**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

Previous documentation on files (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☒ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

NPS, National Capital Region Headquarters

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Guglielmo Marconi Memorial

Name of Property

Section 8 Page 2

Washington, D.C.

County and State

SIGNIFICANCE

The *Guglielmo Marconi Memorial* is significant as a rare example of the commemoration of an individual associated with technology in Washington. Congress approved legislation for the memorial on April 13, 1938 (52 Stat. 217). The monument was erected by popular subscription collected by the Marconi Memorial Foundation. It was completed on June 30, 1941. Attilio Piccirilli, the head of the famous New York stonecarving firm, Piccirilli Brothers, designed and carved the monument. The statue is significant under Criterion C in the area of Art.

Guglielmo Marconi (1874-1937) developed wireless telegraphy. This invention laid the foundation for the creation of the radio. Marconi was born near Bologna, Italy to an Italian businessman and an Irish heiress from a wealthy distilling family with important personal connections. As a child, Guglielmo was a neighbor of the distinguished physicist Professor Righi, who piqued his interest in electricity—especially in the work of Heinrich Hertz. In the early 1890s, Hertz produced and detected the first radio waves in his laboratory. Marconi studied the experiments of Hertz in conjunction with the mathematical proofs of James Maxwell, and other contemporary inventors, and produced improved experiments. By the end of 1895, Marconi could send a message more than a mile away. At this time, he tried to convince the Italian Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs of the importance of his invention. He was unsuccessful in this endeavor. In 1896, his cousin Henry Jameson-Davis arranged an introduction to Nyilliam Preece, Engineer-in-Chief of the British Post Office. Marconi, consequently, achieved his goal of turning Hertz's laboratory demonstration into a practical means of communication. Within two years, he had obtained a patent, founded the Wireless Telegraph and Signal Company Limited, and opened a factory for fabricating equipment in Chelmsford, England.

In 1900, Marconi erected a high-powered transmitting station at Poldhu, on the coast in Cornwall. The following year he built a station in Wellfleet, Massachusetts. The Cape Cod site ultimately resulted in a variety of setbacks that led Marconi to erect a station at Glace Bay, Nova Scotia. This Canadian station received the first two-way transatlantic wireless message on December 17, 1902. The following month, Marconi successfully transmitted messages between President Theodore Roosevelt and King Edward VII from Wellfleet.

Marconi's invention quickly became a commercial success. The installation of wireless technology on ocean-going vessels began in the early 1900s. In 1909, Marconi won a share of the Nobel Prize for physics. The application of wireless technology on ocean-going vessels as a means of safety at sea emerged after the R.M.S. *Titanic* disaster in 1912.

Stone carver Attilio Piccirilli (1868-1945) designed and carved the memorial in conjunction with architect Joseph Freedlander. Attilio was born in Massa-Carrara in the Tuscany region of Italy, to the stonecarver Giuseppe Piccirilli. He studied sculpture at the *Accademia di San Luca* in Rome for five

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Guglielmo Marconi Memorial

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State

Section 8 Page 3

years. The family settled in Manhattan in 1888 and the older members began working at Samuel Adler's Monuments and Granite Works on East 57th Street. Shortly thereafter, they opened their own studio on West 39th Street and in 1890 moved their studio to East 142nd Street in the Bronx. Attilio emerged as the most talented of the six brothers trained as stonecarvers. Though they struggled for the first ten years, the Piccirillis eventually became America's first family of carver-sculptors. The Piccirilli brothers carved works by Augustus Saint-Gaudens, John Quincy Adams Ward, and especially Daniel Chester French. Their work includes: the pediment for the New York Stock Exchange; the *Maine Memorial* for the entrance to Central Park at Columbus Circle; the lions that flank the entrance of the New York Public Library; and Abraham Lincoln for the *Lincoln Memorial* in Washington, D.C.

The landscape plan incorporating a frame of evergreen shrubs was also provided for by the Marconi Memorial Association; it was implemented by the National Capital Parks.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Guglielmo Marconi Memorial

Name of Property

Section 9 Page 1

Washington, D.C.

County and State

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Commission of Fine Arts: Fourteenth Report (Jan. 1, 1940- Jun. 30, 1944) 78th Congress, 2d Sess. Sen. Doc. No. 204.

Goode, James. *The Outdoor Sculpture of Washington, D.C.* Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1974.

Kohler, Sue. *The Commission of Fine Arts: A Brief History 1910-1995.* Washington: Government Printing Office, 1996.

www.marconiusa.org

Guglielmo Marconi Memorial
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre.

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	1 8	3 2 3 4 4 5	4 3 1 1 0 1 4	3							
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing				
2				4							

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Eve L. Barsoum, Historian
organization National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers date October 2006
street & number 444 North Capitol Street, N.W. telephone 202.354.1822
city or town Washington state D.C. zip code 20001

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 SHPO or FPO)

name U.S. Government, administered by the National Park Service, National Capital Region, Rock Creek Park
street & number 3545 Williamsburg Lane, N.W. telephone 202.895.6000
city or town Washington state D.C. zip code 20008

Paperwork Reduction 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 Reduction Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Guglielmo Marconi Memorial

Name of Property

Section 10 Page 2

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County and State

Verbal Boundary Description

The *Guglielmo Marconi Memorial* is situated at the northern end of Reservation 309A at the intersection of Sixteenth and Lamont Streets, NW. The boundary of the object includes the land occupied by the granite pedestals.

Boundary Justification

The boundary of *Guglielmo Marconi Memorial* has been historically associated with the object.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Marconi, Guglielmo, Memorial

MULTIPLE NAME: Memorials in Washington, D.C.

STATE & COUNTY: DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, District of Columbia

DATE RECEIVED: 8/31/07 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 9/17/07
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 10/02/07 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 10/14/07
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 07001057

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: Y

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 10/12/2007 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept c

REVIEWER Patrick Andrews DISCIPLINE Historian

TELEPHONE _____ DATE 10/12/2007

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



GUGLIELMO MARCONI MEMORIAL
WASHINGTON, D.C.

EVE BARSOUM

FEB 2004

NCR

FACING NORTH

1 OF 1

PENN 18 ST<No.11>017
376 20**NN-N-8 16 2<024>

Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64500992