

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic VIRGINIA WAR MEMORIAL CARILLON (PREFERRED) (VHLC File #127-387)

and or common The Carillon

2. Location

street & number 1300 Blanton Avenue N/A not for publication

city, town Richmond N/A vicinity of

state Virginia code 51 county (city) code 760

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Monumental

4. Owner of Property

name Virginia Department of Conservation & Economic Development, c/o Mr. Fred Walker

street & number 1100 State Office Building

city, town Richmond N/A vicinity of state Virginia 23219

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Richmond City Hall

street & number N/A

city, town Richmond state Virginia 23219

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None to date has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date N/A N/A  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town N/A state N/A

# 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>N/A</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

## SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Located at the southern end of Blanton Avenue, the Virginia War Memorial Carillon is an eight-story, 200-foot tall bell tower designed in the Georgian Revival style. Composed of a limestone plinth (which once housed a war museum) and a superimposed tower, the edifice dominates the skyline of western Richmond.

## ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

The imposing tower rests on a limestone plinth, the interior of which was used to house a war museum. On the exterior the main (north) elevation of the base consists of a simple limestone facade with water table and cornerstone. Three granite steps lead up to the level of the top of the water table and connect a pair of curvilinear granite and limestone staircases that are edged by terra cotta balustrades. These steps lead to the top of the plinth.

Bisecting the distance between the stairs is a projecting pavilion that is flanked by two small windows with Roman clathri. This pavilion provides access to the former museum through a pair of eleven paneled metal doors. A heavy string course denotes the top of the plinth and the floor of the elevated terrace formed by the plinth. The east and west elevations of the base are identical, and each is articulated by five barred openings which are spanned by limestone jack arches and filled with 15/15 sash. The rear (south) elevation continues the water table and string courses around the structure, but a pavilion the same width as the tower above (28') projects from the center of the elevation. Flanking the pavilion are paired windows, while the pavilion itself is enlivened by three casement windows of eighteen panes each. At the center of the pavilion at the terrace level, two foliated ancons support a projecting balustraded balconet.

Three steps above the roughly rectangular terrace, the 200-foot carillon tower rises. The first level of this portion of the building is elaborately articulated. On the north facade, two limestone benches mediate between the torus-shaped string course and the steps. These elements flank a central-arched doorway with a molded keystone that is surmounted by an elaborate escutcheon bearing the seal of the state. The transom of the door is filled with a wrought-iron grille and below the grille are paired twelve-panel doors. Above the aforementioned medallion, two paired modillions support a brick and limestone balconet whose terra cotta balusters rise three courses above a heavy limestone string course that encircles the building. The rear elevation is identical, except that it lacks the aforementioned escutcheon.

The east and west elevations of the first level are identical. Each includes the benches, string course, and balconets found on the north and south elevations; but the arched opening is articulated as a relieving arch for a round-headed window. The lower part of the window contains twelve-pane casement windows while the arched area is treated as a transom.

At the second level, the tower becomes biaxially symmetrical. The general wall treatment changes from limestone to English cross-bond brick veneer with rusticated limestone quoins over a steel and concrete frame. A central window, articulated as

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion
___ 1400-1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science
___ 1500-1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture
___ 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	___ education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> military	___ social/
___ 1700-1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	___ humanitarian
___ 1800-1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	___ communications	___ industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics:government	___ transportation
		___ invention		___ other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1928-32      **Builder/Architect** Cram and Ferguson

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Reflecting the patriotic fervor of the time, the Virginia War Memorial Carillon is the sole structure erected by the Commonwealth of Virginia to memorialize the "patriotism and valor of the soldiers, sailors, marines, and women from Virginia"<sup>1</sup> who served in World War I. The concept, design and commission of the memorial were highly influenced by public opinion, and resulting political acts. Although a commission to study a design and site for the memorial was formed as early as 1922, political maneuvering and public campaigns altered the initial design and delayed its dedication until 1932. Designed by the firm of Cram and Ferguson, the building exhibits one of the firm's most opulent examples of the Georgian style, which was chosen expressly because the "Commonwealth of Virginia is the Great Southern exponent of that noble Colonial architecture which has such distinction and essential American quality."<sup>2</sup>

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

With the cessation of hostilities at the declaration of the Armistice in November 1918 and the eventual approval of the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, the citizens of the United States sought to memorialize the efforts of the armed services in World War I. The American Battle Monuments Commission was formed in 1923, Arlington Cemetery was enlarged and improved and the separate states began to commemorate their war dead through the construction of public monuments.

In Virginia an active letter writing campaign and agitation by the American Legion influenced the General Assembly of 1922 to create by Joint Resolution a commission to investigate and to report by 1924 what action the Commonwealth of Virginia should take "in the matter of erecting a World War Memorial."<sup>3</sup>

This preliminary commission requested assistance from the American Legion of Virginia. This organization complied and formed a committee that in September 1923 recommended that the state "erect in Richmond (the capital city) a memorial of non-utilitarian character, the form and design of which was to be determined through open competition, the winners to be selected by the War Memorial Commission."<sup>4</sup> These proposals were adopted by the Commission and incorporated into the "War Memorial Law" (Chapter 405, Acts of 1924) sponsored by Senator Morgan R. Mills, the Chairman of the Commission.<sup>5</sup>

The Commission was formed on March 24, 1924 and its first order of business was to secure a Professional Advisor to the Commission. They employed Dr. Warren P. Laird, Dean of the School of Fine Arts at the University of Pennsylvania and an extremely important figure in the development of architectural education in the United States. In his capacity as Professional Advisor, Laird selected a site for the monument in William Byrd Park at the head of Blanton Avenue. It was described as:

# 9. Major Bibliographical References (See Continuation Sheet #5)

Dedication Program. October 15, 1932.  
 Report of the War Memorial Commission. Richmond: Supt. of Public Printing, 1926.  
 Report of the War Memorial Commission. Richmond: Supt. of Public Printing, 1928.  
 Richmond, VA. Archives Division/Virginia State Library. Harry Flood Byrd Papers.  
 Richmond, VA. Archives Division/Virginia State Library. Gov. John Trinkle Papers.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Approx. 3 acres  
 Quadrangle name Richmond, VA Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A	<u>18</u>	<u>280</u>	<u>51410</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>517</u>	<u>51810</u>	B						
	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing							
C							D						
E							F						
G							H						

**Verbal boundary description and justification** Beginning at a point on the center line of Blanton Ave., projected 643' S of the S line of Granite St.; thence westwardly along the S line of the Pump House Rd. to a point 180' from the center line of Blanton Ave.,  
(See Continuation Sheet #6)

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	<u>N/A</u>	code	county	<u>N/A</u>	code
state	<u>N/A</u>	code	county	<u>N/A</u>	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title VIRGINIA HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION STAFF  
 organization VIRGINIA HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION date August 1984  
 street & number 221 Governor Street telephone (804) 786-3144  
 city or town Richmond state Virginia 23219

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature H. Bryan Mitchell  
 H. Bryan Mitchell, Executive Director  
 title VIRGINIA HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION date August 21, 1984

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

EXP. 10/31/84

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National Park Service

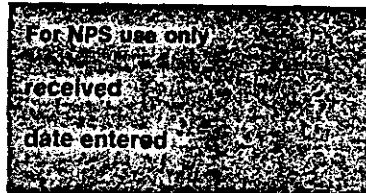
# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

VIRGINIA WAR MEMORIAL CARILLON, RICHMOND, VA

Continuation sheet #1

Item number 7

Page 1



## 7. DESCRIPTION -- Architectural Analysis

a doorway with balustraded balconet, is topped by a terra cotta and brick segmental-arched pediment which, in turn, is supported by terra cotta capiteled Ionic paneled pilasters. A pair of fixed twelve-paned windows topped by four-paned transoms conceals an interior oculus that allows natural light to illuminate the first-floor lobby of the tower.

Following the typical formula for a Colonial-style high-rise, the third through seventh levels contain little decoration. This area continues upward as a simple brick shaft with rusticated limestone quoining and jack-arched slit casement windows.

At the eighth level, approximately one hundred feet above the terrace, is the 44-foot high open bell loft. This course is interrupted by foliated console-supported terra cotta balustraded balconets, while the brick pedestals of the balustrade are topped by ball finials. Behind the balustrade, round-headed brick arches with limestone impostes and keystones provide the lower opening for the bells. Flanking the arches are pairs of limestone Corinthian pilasters which support a full Corinthian entablature. At each of the four corners of the horizontal cornice are placed four limestone bases which, in turn, support urns that are buttressed by volute scrolls. The bases of these urns are interconnected by a balustrade. Behind the balustrade the shape of the tower becomes octagonal. It is fenestrated by trabeated openings filled with cement clathri. A cyma recta stone string course above the windows provides a base for another octagonal arcade of reduced width at the ninth level. This Ionic-pilastered arcade of limestone is decorated with iron railings and supports a Doric entablature. The horizontal cornice of this entablature supports eight finials--one at each turning of the arcade. Behind the finials the cupola base begins. The lower portion is defined by eight wreathed blind oculi that are separated vertically by several limestone string courses from eight round-arched windows with heavy keystones above. Another heavy limestone belt course supports the bottom of the cupola itself. This begins as a large fascia molding which is topped by 2 feet of cyma reversa, fascia with key motif, and cavetto and torus moldings. These moldings support an octagonal lead-sheathed roof that is crowned by a cast-aluminum ball.

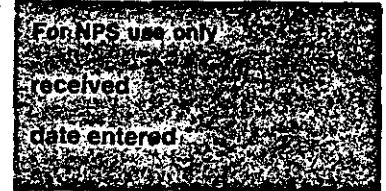
The interior of the structure, as previously mentioned, was used in part as a war museum. This is reached via a limestone-faced corridor that is articulated as a niched vestibule followed by two fluted pilaster lobbies. Inset panels enliven this procession. The final lobby is octagonal with vertical circulation elements in its corners. All ceilings are arched. From the last lobby, which lies directly below the tower, one enters the rectangular-shaped museum area. In this area the walls have received the same pilaster treatment; but the walls themselves are not limestone, rather a simulation stone known as "prystone."

In the tower above the museum, the lower two floors house octagonal limestone-faced rotunda in whose corners are placed elevators and a circular staircase. The room is illuminated at this level by round-arched windows in the east, south, and west facades. These windows are decorated with elaborately carved keystones that are topped by false oculi and flanked by Tuscan  $\frac{1}{2}$  pilasters below the springing of

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Continuation sheet #2

Item number 7, 8

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## 7. DESCRIPTION -- Architectural Analysis

the arches. Each oculus is flanked by carvings of fasces. At each corner of the room, Corinthian pilasters support a full dentillated entablature with a frieze decorated with urn-like carvings. Above the doors to the stairs and elevators, inset panels are carved in low relief with foliate images. On the north facade the grille work and keystone motifs from the exterior are carried on into the interior.

Above the projecting cornice of the aforementioned Corinthian order, eight simulated limestone ribs carved in a guilloche pattern, terminate in a highly carved compression ring. Four oculi, decorated by carvings of sheaves of laurels provide light to the dome.

The upper floors (2-6) contain storage areas, while the seventh floor contains the clavier for the carillon. The top two floors are devoted to the sixty-six bells of the carillon and a small observation platform.

SMB

## 8. SIGNIFICANCE -- Historical Background

...a beautiful location, one of the highest points in the city, and has many unusual advantages in that, while it is readily accessible and is convenient to the main north and south highway through the city, at the same time it is surrounded by hundreds of acres of permanent park reservations, thus offering ample opportunity for the quiet study and sacred contemplation which every worthy memorial should have, and also being guaranteed against commercial and residential encroachments in the future.

This site was, in fact, selected over the objections of the Richmond citizenry who preferred a site nearer the Capitol; but after several hearings, the Richmond City Council agreed to provide a deed to the Commonwealth for the Byrd Park site. The city not only deeded the site, but agreed to provide sympathetic landscape treatment for the surrounding areas of the park and to widen the roads approaching and adjacent to the Memorial.

As a result of a preliminary competition in which architects from the state were invited to submit examples of their work, seven architectural firms were chosen. These seven, as specified in terms of the second stage of the competition, were required to associate with an architect from outside the state and with a sculptor. Drawings were due before the Commission before August 25, 1925, when a Jury of Award would convene to review the projects. This Jury, selected by the competitors themselves, consisted of Harvey Wiley Corbett, the well known skyscraper architect; the sculptor Hermon A. McNeil; and Joseph Hudnut, Dean of the School of Fine Arts at the University of Virginia and the eventual Dean of the School of Architecture at Harvard. (He was also responsible for bringing Gropius to the United States.)

(See Continuation Sheet #3)

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VIRGINIA WAR MEMORIAL CARILLON, RICHMOND, VA

Continuation sheet #3

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8. SIGNIFICANCE -- Historical Background

The Jury selected the design by Marcellus Wright and Paul Cret, as a:

...compact, well proportioned, composition in which several elements are skillfully related so as to obtain a complete unity of effect. It shows a profound knowledge of architectural form, being in every detail scholarly and competent, it is original and vigorous in its use of accepted forms. It respects the architectural tradition of Virginia, while adding to that tradition fresh and unusual but wholly consistent elements...

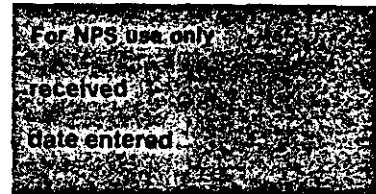
...Impressive as is its monumental quality and its graceful decorations, it is, nevertheless, its expression of the spirit of sacrifice and of devotion to duty that make this design notable. The majestic altar and screen dedicated to liberty, the brazier symbolic of victory, tempered by thanksgiving, and the solemn sanctuary in which rests the body of the "Unknown Soldier;" these make an ensemble which, when executed, will be a memorable witness to the truest and deepest sentiments that the war has evoked.

In defiance to plans to build the accepted design, a group of citizens, led by Granville Valentine, a local artist and industrialist, under the title of the Virginia Citizen's Carillon Committee, mounted an effective campaign to replace the winning design with that of a carillon. Valentine, who had seen and heard the carillons at Andover and Cohasset, Massachusetts, became entranced by the idea that a carillon, whose sound could be broadcast through the "great miracle of the 20th century--the Radio," would provide a constant reminder of the valor and sacrifice of those who served in World War I, even for those who would never see it. Aided by numerous editorials in the Richmond Times-Dispatch, Valentine mounted a propaganda campaign whose success can be measured by the hundreds of letters written to Governors Byrd and Trinkle calling for a carillon as the War Memorial.

In the meantime, work on the Cret/Wright memorial continued apace and on January 19, 1926, the cornerstone of the monument was laid. Valentine, however, was able to marshal sufficient support in the legislature so that, on March 25, 1926, the General Assembly approved an act that committed the Commonwealth to construct a carillon-type of monument. Wright and Cret were asked to redesign their memorial and they refused. The Commission, its hands forced by the legislature, then requested that Cram and Ferguson, who had initially submitted a carillon scheme to the competition in association with the Staunton firm of T.J. Collins and Sons, prepare drawings for a carillon. This they did and the work was accepted by the Commission in 1928.

The design of 1928 was substantially fulfilled in the completed work, the only changes being the deletion of an angelic figure from the top of the spire and the replacement of a single grand stair with a pair of curving stairs.

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VIRGINIA WAR MEMORIAL CARILLON, RICHMOND, VA

Continuation sheet #4

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## 8. SIGNIFICANCE -- Historical Background

This is a fairly late commission for the Boston architectural firm. Initially recognized as among the best Neo-Gothic-mode designers in the United States during the late 1920s, the firm began to manifest a new catholicity of taste. The firm devised Colonial schemes for Phillips Exeter Academy, Williams College, and Wheaton College. The architects themselves best described their design intentions in a letter addressed to Bolling H. Handy, Secretary of the War Memorial Commission:

The architectural style chosen was in our opinion, and fortunately, imposed by the nature of the memorial and the place where it is to stand. The Commonwealth of Virginia is the great Southern exponent of that noble Colonial architecture which has such distinction and essential American quality. In every detail our design is based on the best precedents we can find for this type of work. We have, in every way, endeavored to make the design not only consistent with Virginia precedent, but as well not unworthy of comparison with the local monuments that still exist.

Work on the structure began in 1928 and continued in fits and starts (due to fund raising efforts by a consortium of public and private groups) and was completed and dedicated on October 15, 1932. The war museum intended for the base of the tower opened shortly thereafter. The carillon was originally intended as an instrument that would be played on a regular schedule. The vagaries of municipal and state budgets prevented this from occurring. In the early 1960s, the bells originally cast by John Taylor of Loughborough, England, were recast by the same firm and the war museum was merged with the State War Memorial Museum in Newport News, Virginia. The Richmond Federated Arts Council occupied the space for a short period, but poor maintenance of the structure had made the museum unoccupable due to serious roof leaks. The subsequent departure of the Arts Council has left the building vacant and the Carillon unplayed. The building is currently undergoing major renovation that is being funded by a consortium of state, municipal, and private interests.

SMB

<sup>1</sup> Acts of Virginia, Chapter 405, 1924 (SB 23).

<sup>2</sup> Report of the War Memorial Commission (Richmond: 1928), p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Report of the War Memorial Commission (Richmond: 1926), p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 3-4.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 5.



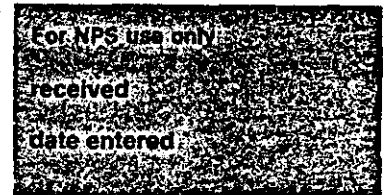
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VIRGINIA WAR MEMORIAL CARILLON, RICHMOND, VA

Continuation sheet #5

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## 8. SIGNIFICANCE -- Footnotes

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 7. The seven final teams were:

Architects—Baskerville & Lambert, of Richmond, VA  
Associate—D.D. Ellington, of Pittsburgh, PA  
Sculptor—John Gregory, of New York City

Architects—Lee, Smith & Vandervoort, of Richmond, VA  
Associate—Buckler & Fenhagen, of Baltimore, MD  
Sculptor—Edmond R. Amateis, of New York City

Architect—Marcellus E. Wright, of Richmond, VA  
Associate—Paul P. Cret, of Philadelphia, PA  
Sculptor—Berthold Nebel, of New York City

Architect—T.J. Collins & Son, of Staunton, VA  
Associate—Cram & Ferguson, of Boston, MA  
Sculptor—Cyrus E. Dallin, of Arlington, MA

Architect—Peebles & Ferguson, of Norfolk, VA  
Associate—Carrere & Hastings, of New York City  
Sculptor—Paul M. Bartlett, of New York City

Architect—Charles J. Calrow, of Norfolk, VA  
Associate—Parker, Thomas & Rice, of Boston, MA  
Sculptor—Emil Fuchs, of New York City

Architect—Neff & Thompson, of Norfolk, VA  
Associate—Armstrong & DeGelleke, of New York City  
Sculptor—James E. Fraser, of New York City

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 9-10.

<sup>9</sup> Pamphlet of Virginia Citizen's Carillon Committee n.p.

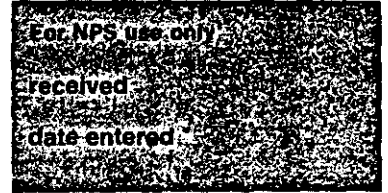
<sup>10</sup> Report of the War Memorial Commission (Richmond: 1928), p. 9.

## 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Richmond, VA. Valentine Museum. Granville Valentine Papers.

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National Park Service

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VIRGINIA WAR MEMORIAL CARILLON, RICHMOND, VA

Continuation sheet #6

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Page 1

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA -- Verbal Boundary Description & Boundary Justification

and measured at right angles thereto; thence southwardly 360' along a line parallel to the center line of Blanton Ave.; thence eastwardly and at right angles 360'; thence northwardly and parallel to the center line of Blanton Ave. 393' more or less to the S line of the Pump House Rd. to the point of origin. --City of Richmond, Plat Book #6 (1925), p. 179.

Boundary Justification: Boundary conforms to deed of land given by City of Richmond to Commonwealth of Virginia for the express purpose of erecting a war memorial.

5459 III SE (BON AIR)  
ECON AIR 5 MI.  
4160  
4159  
4158  
32°30"  
4157  
4156  
4155  
430 000 FEET  
4154

**127-507**

**CARILLON AT BYRD PARK**

# RICHMOND

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

## JAMES

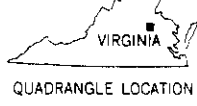
### RICHMOND, VA.

N3730—W7722.5/7.5

1964

PHOTOREVISED 1981

DMA 5559 III SW—SERIES V834



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

**UTM LOCATION:**

**10** Zone    **200560** Easting    **4157500** Northing

