Please see **TURNOVER**, page 4

YEAR IN REVIEW: *Undergraduate Council President NOAH Z. SETON '00 (back, L) and Vice President KAMIL E. REDMOND '00 (front) say goodbye at their final meeting as Council Secretary JAMES R. GRIFFIN '02 looks on.*

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Construction May Endanger Dumbarton Oaks Gardens

By NATHANIEL L. SCHWARTZ
CRIMSON STAFF WRITER

Harvard's Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection in [redacted]ington, D.C., the site of the World War II conference that resulted in the formation of the United Nations, is still widely known for two things: its historic decorative gardens and its research centers on ancient art.

Now, in trying to expand one, the University has aroused fears that it will destroy the other—and since the gardens possibly in peril were designed by famous American designer Beatrix Farrand, this construction plan has become a national concern.

To create more space for its art library, Harvard hopes to build directly below the manicured gardens, tearing up walls and fountains that they plan to replace once construction is finished.

The prospect has mobilized land[redacted]e architects, Farrand scholars and neighbors to protect the site from renovation.

Harvard's plan calls for the construction of a 25,000-square-foot underground library adjoining the main Dumbarton building.

The two-story building will be visible only in scattered ground-level skylights.

The library will consolidate all the books from the various collections as well as many of the artifacts themselves, a goal that Harvard has held since the 1940s when it first floated a plan for a library on the site.

Dumbarton Oaks consists of a mansion and the surrounding grounds that were donated to Harvard in 1940, along with a large art collection.

Since then, Harvard has added to the collection and used the site as a center for a small group of research fellows to study both art and literature about art in an intimate and intensive environment.

The purpose of Dumbarton Oaks, according to Dumbarton director, Edward L. Keenan, is to allow its 18 research fellows to "study the museum objects and very specialized libraries that have been built around these objects."

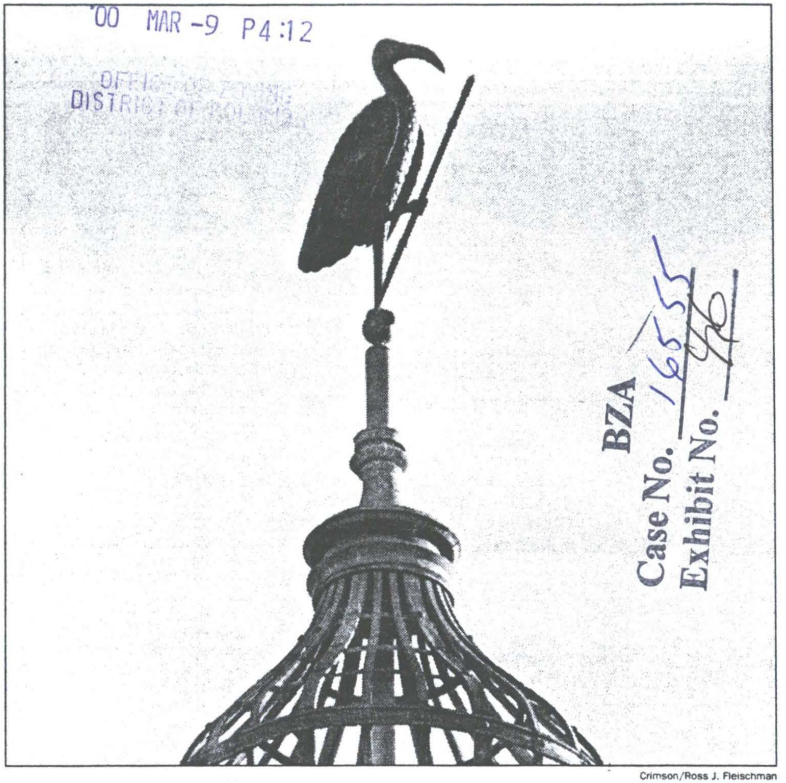
The collection includes pieces from pre-Columbian America and the Byzantine Empire. As the center's libraries and collections have grown, officials say, so has the need for a centralized facility.

But neighbors' activism led to the demise of Harvard's attempt to build this kind of central facility 25 years ago.

James Urban, the landscape architect involved in the current project, says that plan was less carefully planned than the new proposal.

Please see **EXPANSION**, *page* **3**

AIN'T NOTHIN' LIKE THE REAL THING



Crimson/Ross J. Fleischman

For the past two weeks, this copy of the Lampoon's Ibis statue has graced the top of the club's Sorrento Square headquarters. Please see story, page 7.

HARVARD CRIMSON 1/10/00

HARVARD BRIEFS

Time, Rudenstine Pick Einstein As Person of Century

Both University President Neil L. Rudenstine and Time Magazine recent- hose Albert Einstein as Person of the entury.

Coincidence?

The magazine solicited Rudenstine's opinion for their Dec. 31 issue, in which they revealed the winner of their much-discussed and-debated poll. Other academics, business leaders and politicians with international reputations were also asked for their picks.

Writing in Time, Rudenstine lauded Einstein's singularly universal contribution to the 20th century.

"This man embodied the power of scientific imagination and genius, stimulating a century of the most remarkable research and discovery in human history. Equally important, he did so in a way that indicated how science could be humane in its spirit, wise in its uses nd moral in its purposes," Rudenstine's comment to the magazine reads.

"Although Einstein's scientific work in theoretical physics has inevitably been associated with the birth of the atomic age, he spoke out early in the 1930s against the brutalizing forces of his time. He came to exemplify a special conception of heroism in which intellectual brilliance and immense creativity were fused with human values dedicated to the unwavering pursuit of peace."

Rudenstine told The Crimson that he originally responded to Time's request for comment by ranking Einstein first, Class of 1904 Harvard alum Franklin D. Roosevelt, (also a Crimson president), second and Mohandas K. Gandhi third.

Roosevelt and Gandhi were Time's runners-up.



Courtesy C. Reed

Historic gardens designed by Beatrix Farrand will be disrupted if Harvard goes ahead with renovations to the Dumbarton Oaks Library.

Renovations May Imperil Historic Gardens

EXPANSION, *from page* **1**

Now, Harvard planners say they are attempting a much more sensitive treatment of the garden.

However, the project, "still in the early to middle stages of schematic design," according to architect Richard Williams, is already garnering opposition from various neighborhood and architectural fronts.

A Sacred Place

"What you have to understand is that, for landscape architects, Dumbarton Oaks is a very sacred place—a sacred landscape," explains Clarissa Rowe, a Boston architect and president of Historic Massachusetts Inc., who grew up playing in Dumbarton Oak's Farrand gardens.

Rowe says that even when she was young, the garden inspired her. Since then, she has learned more about Farrand's work and believes strongly in its preservation.

Farrand, who designed the garden when the site was still privately owned in the 1920s and '30s, was the only female founding member of the American Society of Landscape Architecture.

She also worked on the Princeton and Yale campuses, but many consider Dumbarton Oaks to be her seminal work.

"If Frederick Law Olmstead is the father of landscape architecture, Beatrix Farrand is the mother," Rowe says.

Keenan, says he agrees that the garden must be preserved as a place that is "simply beautiful." But he says focusing on the garden simply because it was created by Farrand, can create a undesirable impulse to freeze the site in time.

"There are all sorts of places where famous people have trodden, but you can't make all of these places into Jerusalem," Keenan says.

Some people adopt a "quasi-religious attitude, which makes us forget that Dumbarton Oaks is a living changing place," Keenan says.

Both Urban and Williams, the team that Harvard has hired to design the library, say that they are completely aware of the need to protect the Dumbarton Oaks garden intact.

Indeed, at the urgings of the D.C. community boards who have reviewed their work so far, the architects have made plans to add a 'cultural landscape historian' to their team.

They will also commission a major cultural landscape report in order to determine Farrand's exact wishes for the site and how they can build without harming her garden.

"As we see it, our intervention into the historic fabric of the garden, in terms of the final result, will be as minimal as possible," Urban says.

The Plan

Although the architects say they hope to build an entire building below Farrand's garden, under the section of the lawns known as the North Vista, they say that their project will only force the removal of four mature trees from the site, two of which were not even planted by Farrand.

As for the lawn and walls and paths that the project will force construction crews to tear up, the architects say that these will not sustain any permanent damage.

The walls and paths will simply be removed temporarily, stored, and replaced. The grass can be replanted, and the architects say they envision Dumbarton Oaks looking almost unchanged.

But this optimism is not shared by some of the architects who have reviewed the plan.

Rowe, who is presently working on the Big Dig in Boston, says that although she believes the intentions are good, such projects are rarely successful.

"All our good intentions for preservation go somewhat out the window when you work with a construction crew," Rowe says. "These are very delicate materials—things will get broken."

The scale and history of the project means that, before building, Harvard will need approval from the Historic Preservation Review Board, and the Board of Zoning and Adjustment as well as some measure of neighborhood approval.

To halt Harvard's plans, a Web site has been created that includes a petition against the project, which opponents will eventually send to the planning boards.

Votes against Harvard by any of these boards would most likely force a lengthy appeals process and some change of building plans.

However, the one board that Harvard has already presented its plans to, the Advisory Neighborhood Committee, voted unanimously to endorse the proposal.

According to Keenan, most of the people who actually sit down with the plans believe that Harvard is acting conscientiously. But opposition will always remain.

"Even if we get all the licenses and the permits, there will just be some people who think it is too precious a territory to touch at all," Keenan says.

University Likely to Accept Recommendation to Dissolve HIID

Letters

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gy that was plagued, in Lee's words, by "programming ineptitude?" "For those of use who like to keep count" writes Lee, "that's $600 billion" spent on Y2K. I do like to keep count. And so does the U.S. government. The Y2K White House official told me that the correct number was $200 billion.

It seems that Lee has a Y2K bug of his own: gullibility to ultra right-wing propaganda.

GUY L. SMITH '01
Feb. 12, 2000

Construction Unnecessary, May Harm Dumbarton Oaks

To the editors:

I read with interest The Crimson article ("Construction May Endanger Dumbarton Oaks Gardens," News, Jan. 10) regarding Harvard's plan to build an underground library beneath the garden of Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, DC. It was a fairly comprehensive article; however, it failed to make any mention of the fact that an alternative site for such a building exists, within the property holdings of Dumbarton Oaks, which would in no way disrupt the highly cherished garden designed by Beatrix Farrand.

When asked why this site was not considered, the director's answer is that there must be contiguity between the scholars and their sources and that a campus arrangement is unacceptable and would be a "programmatic liability." By arguing that scholars, objects and books must be contiguous, he creates a need for an immediately adjacent library that does not exist. Few scholars worldwide have such an ideal arrangement. And regardless, who wouldn't prefer to walk through a garden to consult their sources in an above ground library with natural light?

Despite assurances that the garden will be restored exactly as it is today, no guarantees can be given. It is false optimism to assume that the North Vista as a roof garden, which is what it will be, can ever have the same character or viability as it does today.

Disturbance to the garden will extend far beyond the footprint of the building as shown on the elegant concept drawings. Furthermore, underground buildings are notoriously high maintenance. We have only to observe the "state-of-the-art" Sackler Museum here in Washington, whose handsome Enid Haupt garden is constantly being dug up to repair leaks to the roof. There are other numerous examples of failed underground buildings.

We do not know whether the Fire Marshal will insist that a wide fire engine access lane be cut through the garden. He also may require fire exits leading directly into the garden, since the existing drawings now show that the only egress is through tunnels to the main building. These questions cannot be answered until construction drawings are completed.

The threats to the garden subject to such an undertaking are enormous and unpredictable. It is interesting to note that while it is unlikely a proposal to tear down a wing of the house would ever be considered, gardens are seen as more dispensable.

Finally, I believe that Mildred W. Bliss had the belief when she handed over, and richly endowed, Dumbarton Oaks to Harvard that it would be a trustworthy steward of her beloved garden. Who is to say how she would weigh potential damage and changes to her garden against the needs and interests of scholarly research? I, for one, think she would consider it a betrayal of her trust in Harvard.

It is ironic that an institution that was established in part for the study of garden scholarship and as the repository of Bliss' unique collection of rare horticultural and historic garden books should be involved in the possible destruction of one of the country's finest gardens.

President Neil L. Rudenstine must consider carefully the alternative options for this expansion before embarking on a course that endangers a valued legacy to the nation.

FLORENCE EVERIS
Washington, D.C., Jan. 13, 2000
The writer is member of Concerned Citizens for Dumbarton Oaks.