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Rock Creek Park

Gail Spilsbury

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Beautifully illustrated with fifty paintings and archival and contemporary photographs, *Rock Creek Park* celebrates Washington, D.C.'s, resplendent wilderness retreat through the riveting story of its formation and preservation. More than one hundred years after its authorization by Congress, in a city that has become a world capital, Rock Creek Park continues to offer Washingtonians and millions of visitors a peaceful sanctuary in the heart of an urban environment.

Rock Creek Park explores the original vision for the park as conceived in the 1902 McMillan Plan for Washington's beautification, which was followed by the 1918 *Rock Creek Park Report*, by Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., son of the eminent nineteenth-century landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted. The younger Olmsted's report warned managers and future generations of park users that "the dominant consideration, never to be subordinated to any other purpose in dealing with Rock Creek Park, is the permanent preservation of its wonderful beauty, and the making of that beauty accessible to the people without spoiling the scenery in the process." This landscape philosophy deeply influenced Rock Creek Park's remarkable degree of historic integrity over the past century.

Rock Creek Park pays tribute to the Olmsted family for their contribution to urban and park planning throughout the United States. From Rock Creek Park in Washington, D.C., to Central and Prospect parks in New York City, to the Emerald Necklace of linked parks in Boston, the Olmsteds helped to establish a national attitude toward public spaces which has endured.

Visitors to Rock Creek Park will find in this volume practical information on the park's recreational resources such as biking, horseback riding, tennis, and nature programs. The pictures and historic account of the park also will inspire park lovers and travelers to appreciate the natural wonders preserved in this extraordinary national treasure.

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