

# **A University of Wisconsin Arboretum Narrative: Changing Landscapes and Changing Meaning**

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## **Abstract**

As societies change, so too does their relationship with the land. These changing relationships are reflected in and imprinted upon the land on which they live. In order to demonstrate how the landscape of the UW Arboretum has mirrored this changing association with nature through time, we have conducted an environmental history which focuses on four vignettes representing major changes in this relationship. Through research of primary data sources such as historical newsletters, observation, and plat map analysis our research shows that the Arboretum is a palimpsest of landforms and meaning resulting from these changing relationships.

## **Introduction**

Environmental History is the study of the changing relationship between human beings and the natural world. We believe that the UW arboretum is a landscape that, through time, has been reflective of this changing relationship. Our purpose is to demonstrate how the landscape of the UW Arboretum has changed through time and how these changes reflect a cycle of changing, complex relationships between society and nature. We utilize multiple primary resources in our analysis such as plat maps, CCC newsletters, photographs, observations and personal reflections from our own field journals.

We will demonstrate how the UW Arboretum is representative of this changing relationship in a number of ways. It is a reminder of early connections to the land represented by numerous burial mounds. The mounds also symbolize, through the multitude of possible interpretations of their purpose, people's ever-changing interpretations of our relationship with nature in general. Native American subsistence practices are also highlighted to demonstrate these connections. This is followed by an examination of white settlement when a new narrative concerning humans' relationship to the land led to feelings of disconnection and a need to dominate and commodify nature in order to find value in it. Later we examine how the perception of land as a commodity grew in the early 20th century, manifesting in a planned, but never realized, community called Lake Forest. At the time this development was deemed an improvement, more important than nature to the growing city of Madison. As we move on we highlight a change in the old narrative of the domination and commodification, to one of respect and desire for nature. This desire was felt throughout the nation and was personified in Madison by some of the city's most prominent founders, whose advocacy led to the eventual formation of a UW Arboretum. Similarly, we look at the presence of the CCC within the boundaries of the Arboretum as indicative of this new-found respect nature. This camp represented a growing national desire, sparked by ecological catastrophes such as the dust bowl, to heal the damage done by an aggressive and dominating human

population bent on subduing nature. Finally we transition to the formation of the Arboretum itself, and its emphasis on ecological restoration and a new land ethic. This final realization of the UW Arboretum represents a return in the cycle of human/nature relationships to one of co-existence, connectedness and respect. Further, we highlight how, even in this pretext, contemporary users of the Arboretum have markedly different ways of interacting with the landscape. This demonstrates what we have emphasized all along, that this landscape and the meanings attached to it are highly palimpsestic and complex.

## Mounds

Indian mounds are, undeniably, a part of the Wisconsin landscape. At the time of the earliest European explorers there were approximately 20,000 mounds here, clustered around lakes, along rivers, and astride hill tops (Birmingham 2000: 3). Early visitors to the Madison area would have encountered approximately 150 of them around the land that would one day be the UW Arboretum. The mound distribution map of Wisconsin (Fig. 1) and the sketch map of mounds around Lake Wingra (Fig. 2) give a real sense that Dane County and specifically the area around the Arboretum were very important to the late woodland mound builders. Despite a century and a half of destruction by settling farmers and urban expansion, these mounds still provide a lasting impression of a culture long since lost. The majority of existing mounds in Wisconsin today can be arranged into three major groups: conical (round), linear (cigar shaped), and effigy (meaning “in the shape of” and often representing some animal form). Today there are approximately twenty mounds, arranged in two major groupings, within the boundaries of the Arboretum. Grouping one, just south of the lake in Wingra woods (Appendix 1), contains six linear, six conical, and two effigy (bird and panther or ‘water spirit’) mounds.

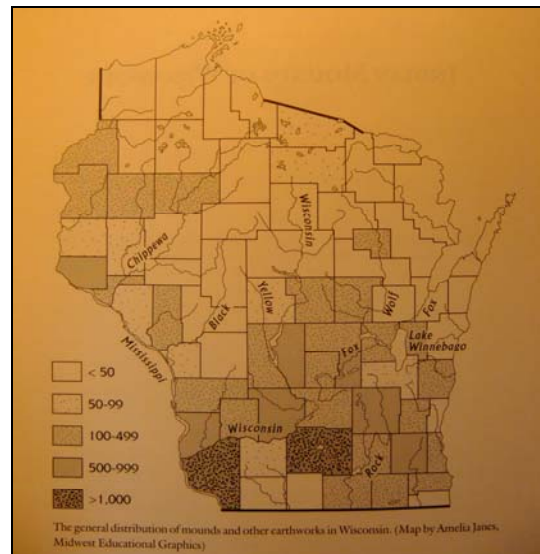


Figure 1: Mound distribution map of Wisconsin. From Birmingham and Eisenberg, *Indian Mounds of Wisconsin*.

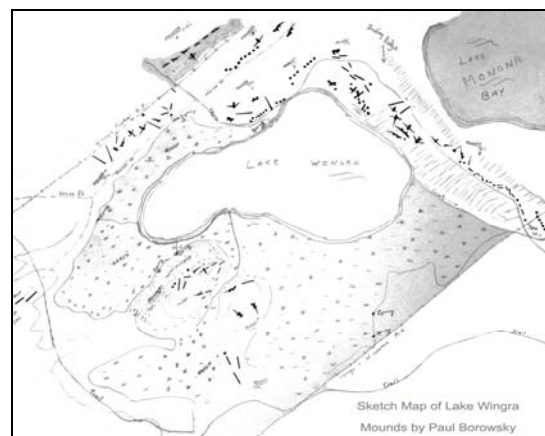


Figure 2: Mounds distributed along Lake Wingra UW-Arboretum Archives, Uncataloged.

Mound group two, further south in Gallistel woods, contains two linear, one conical and one panther mound.

The idea of the Arboretum as a palimpsest can be represented by these mounds. The multiplicity of meanings that have been applied to them over time, as settlers and scholars alike have offered their interpretations of them, is similar to the abundance of those applied to the Arboretum as a whole. Similarly, the physical layering of landscape forms, as demonstrated by the trees growing out of the mound in figure 3, adds to this idea of an ever changing landscape.



Figure 3: Trees growing out of burial mound. The landscape as a “palimpsest”.  
Source: Ryan Kelly

### *Mounds as Burial Sites*

One of the most obvious interpretations of Indian mounds is that they are burial sites. This assumption has merit but not all of them contain burials. Further, the proximity of burial mounds from different time periods suggests that these earthworks were multi-generational ceremonial centers and implies a shared sense of the importance of place. Archaeological evidence has shown that the majority

of the earliest circular mounds, dating between 500 B.C. and 100 A.D., *did* contain human remains. According to Paul Radin, “[t]he conical mounds were unquestionably used for purposes of burial (1990: 36).” However, only twenty to twenty five percent of the later effigy mounds, dating between 700 and 1200 A.D., contain such burials (National Park Service). Many mound groups in Wisconsin, including the two in the Arboretum, contain both the conical and effigy types, built hundreds of years apart. This is “a strong indication that the sacred character of [this] place continued to be recognized and shared over a long period of time, perhaps even by people from different cultural backgrounds (Birmingham and Eisenberg 2000: 4)”.

### *Mounds as Defensive Structures*

A second interpretation of the Indian mounds, that adds complexity to these layers of meaning, is that they – and linear mounds specifically – served as defensive earthworks. Interviews of the Winnebago in Wisconsin, conducted by Paul Radin, concerning the nature of linear mounds revealed a general agreement amongst them that they were used as defensive structures to dodge behind in battle. When pressed, out of skepticism, the Indians claimed that these mounds ought to be found in great numbers around Lake Koshkonong, as it was the location of a great battle long ago. Surprisingly, research done by A. B. Stout on that site uncovered no less than 481 mounds in a small thirty one square mile area around the lake (Radin 1990: 34-35). Similarly, Richard Taylor observed a linear mound in the Wisconsin territory, “the position of which indicated its having been designed for the purposes of defense or fortification against an enemy (1838: 93).” This theory has been resoundingly rejected due to the lack of archaeological evidence of warfare on these sites. However, this author has observed that the linear mounds in the Arboretum are situated on hill crests, and run parallel to the hill line, two features common to many defensive structures.

### *Mounds as Markers of Territory*

In lieu of such contested meanings for the mounds we will now examine a more accepted, but still debatable idea of what they meant. Some contest that effigy mounds functioned as geographical markers of Winnebago clan territory or property. “At every period in the recorded history of man...in every stage of civilization, we have seen the adoption of symbols and devices...to characterize nations, orders and classes.” This fact gave Richard C. Taylor due reason to believe that the effigy mounds “may have served in some way to designate the respective tribes or branches to which the deceased, in whose honor the structures were reared, belonged (1838: 104).” Similarly, William Gartner posits that “the existence of empty effigy mounds strongly suggest that it is the actual construction of the mounds that was important

to Late Woodlanders, not their contents” and that they could therefore be seen more as “social definitions of territory (1999: 678-80)”. Further, Radin was informed that “it had been customary...to erect near the habitation of each clan an effigy of their clan animal. In other words, these effigy mounds were, to all intents and purposes, property marks (1990: 31)”. However, the fact that certain important clan animals were never represented, namely the wolf, the buffalo, and the fish, casts some doubt on this theory as well.

### *Mounds as Spiritual Representations*

In response to these doubts, theories have been given explaining them as representations of important spirits integral in the cosmological make up of the Winnebago universe. Research done in the 1970’s recognized that effigy mounds could be classed in three ways, representing the three natural realms of air, earth and water on whose resources the Winnebago depended (Mallam 1976). Robert Hall then postulated that the effigies were very similar to depictions of powerful spirits who inhabited the upper-world (air) and lower-world (earth and water) in the cosmology of the Winnebago. This spiritual connection to the ‘natural realms’ served to reinforce a sustainable human/nature relationship essential to their survival. Hall noticed that mound groups were usually dominated by one of these two categories and considered them as “monumental constructions of the cosmology of their builders”, representative of this spiritual division (1993: 51).

### *Mounds as Representations of a Balanced Human/Nature Relationship*

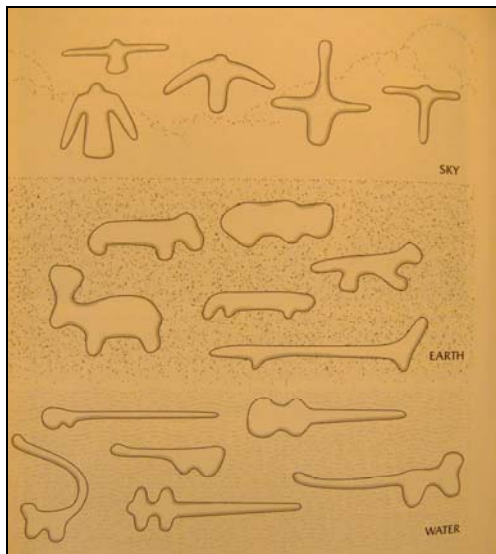


Figure 4: Spiritual divisions of mounds.  
From Birmingham and Eisenberg, *Indian Mounds of Wisconsin*.

The research done by Mallam and Hall serve to reinforce the idea that effigy mounds are symbolic of the strong ties to the land and of the balance between the Winnebago and nature. Mallam believed that mound building was meant to symbolize and maintain, through ritual, this balance. In agreement, Birmingham and Eisenberg noted that in different mound groups, “whatever the predominant form, [be it upper-world or lower-world]...the complimentary or opposing [form] is almost always represented” and that this “supports Mallam’s contention that the effigy mound groups reflect concerns about maintaining balance and harmony in the world (2000: 115-16).” Figure 4 shows the three spiritual

divisions and their corresponding shapes. When we compare Mallam and Hall's ideas to the mound groups in figure 2 we see that there *is* a relative balance between these divisions. Mallam also believed that mound building represented a kind of social and spiritual renewal. In this way then, he saw it as "more than just a coincidence, that [mound group areas] were also areas which contained large quantities of high-yielding and annually renewable natural resources" such as the wild rice, fish and game available year round near the waters of Lake Wingra (Mallam: 1976)".

This survey has been demonstrative of the multitude of different theories and possible meanings attached to Indian mounds in the Arboretum. One thing alone seems certain, that these mounds represent an agglomeration of different meanings in much the same way that the Arboretum does. Further, they offer a sense of the Winnebagos' strong spiritual and social connections to the land. As Katherine Rankin and Robert Birmingham summarize in their publication *Native American Mounds in Madison and Dane County*:

"Whatever the meaning of the effigies, it is currently believed that effigy mound groups were more than just burial places. They appear to have functioned as multi-purpose ceremonial centers that were periodically visited by members of a family, band or tribal group for a variety of social, religious, political and economic activities. These activities served to integrate the group, reinforce its identity and beliefs, and to reaffirm its links to the land and the supernatural world (Birmingham and Rankin 1994: 6)."

This diversity of meaning is a good indicator of the diverse array of meanings attached to the Arboretum as a whole.

## **Subsistence**

The Winnebago's close relationship to the land can also be seen in the way they used its resources for subsistence. As Mallam indicated above, the area around Lake Wingra was abound with 'large quantities of high-yielding and annually renewable natural resources' on which the Winnebago survived. In order to endure they needed to solidify a reasonably sustainable relationship with these resources so as not to deplete them. They were not seen as property or commodities, or as a source of wealth or profit, but purely as a means of survival.



## White Settlement

As we move into the next stage of this landscape's history, we will see a change in the meanings that are attached to it. The way that these meanings changed during white settlement can best be described as a shift from a close relationship to the land, defined by low-intensity land use, and subsistence hunting, and agriculture to one of detachment and domination punctuated by high-intensity land use and capitalism. This change was the result of a changing narrative concerning society's relationship with nature combined with a new market culture brought by the settlers.

### *The Recovery Narrative*

“God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground’ (Genesis 1:28).”

The preceding verse is very telling of how white settlement affected the landscape around Lake Wingra and what those changes meant to the settlers. The story of the recovery of Eden through the subduing of nature is one that is well known in the environmental history of the United States. It is a narrative that has influenced the shape of the landscape and people's attachments to it well before Europeans set foot on North America. According to Carolyn Merchant, it “is perhaps the most important mythology humans have developed to make sense of their relationship to the earth” and has, since the 1600's, been the impetus behind human efforts to recover Eden by converting wild nature into a civilized garden (2004: 2). In other words, this story was the foundation that gave settling farmers the desire and the divine right to convert the landscape around Lake Wingra from virgin prairie and oak into one of hewn stumps, and fields of torn furrows. This narrative signaled the beginning of major changes in the relationship between humans and the environment. The beginnings of a disconnection. As Donald Worster claims

“There has been no more important change in the human condition than the transition from a traditional sense of intimate dependence on the ecological community to the modern feeling of absolute free will and human autonomy (1979: 95).”

The development of this narrative rested on the shoulders of a relative few.

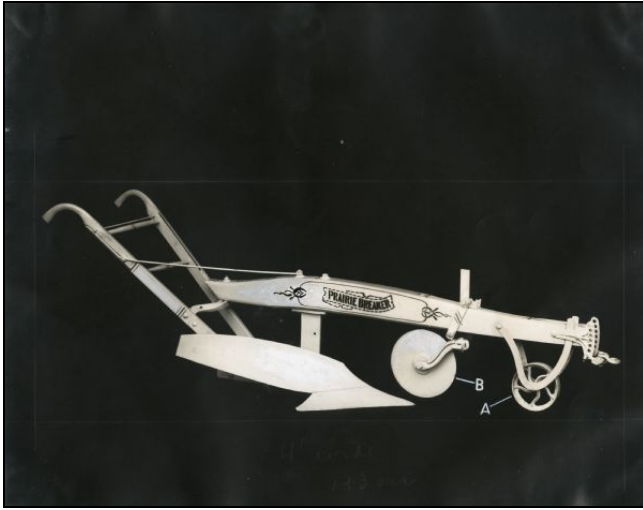


Figure 6: The "Prairie Breaker" plow  
Wisconsin Historical Society; ID WHI-74848

Francis Bacon was one of the most influential philosophers and writers responsible for the modern Recovery narrative. In the 1620's he announced a new, modern vision of recovery. Bacon believed that in the fall from the garden, humanity had lost its dominion over creation. "For in losing his first estate he lost the dominion over the creatures which was its highest privilege, and ever since has worn out few and evil days, exposed to want, sickness, and death (Bacon 1869: 114)." He saw science and technology as the path to regaining

control of nature and thereby recovering the original garden. Under Bacon, it was every settler's God given right and duty to "interrogate" nature with the best means science and technology could provide. In many instances this relationship was best represented by the plow. Broad bladed plows like the "prairie breaker" (Fig. 6) were needed to penetrate deep enough into the soil in order to unearth the deep rooted prairie grasses. The name alone speaks to the aggressiveness of this new narrative. With this single implement, and a team of oxen, a lone farmer could convert many acres of prairie into domestic wheat or corn in one season. This kind of conversion "represents one the most complete ecological transformations of a [Wisconsin] landscape" at the hands of the white settlers (Cronon 1983: 147). Science and technology had made encouraged "an exploitative relationship with the earth: a bond that was strictly commercial, so that the land became nothing more than a form of capital that must be made to pay as much as possible (Worster 2004: 93)."

Another influential writer and philosopher was John Locke. Locke saw the ideal earth as an ordered garden. His idea of a "civil society" was defined by the acquisition of private property. He believed property ownership was every man's natural right and not just the right of the monarchy as had been the case in England. This idea gave the commoner the power to own and 'improve' the land as he saw fit. It was this capitalistic ideal that encouraged the settlers to set about exploiting the land for all it was worth. Locke's view of personal property was tied directly to the idea of enclosing and farming the land as a kind of consecration of ownership.

“That was his property which could not be taken from him where-ever he had fixed it. And hence subduing or cultivating the earth, and having dominion, we see are joined together. The one gave title to the other. So that God, by commanding to subdue, gave authority so far to appropriate: and the condition of human life, which requires labor and materials to work on, necessarily introduces private possessions (Locke 1689: 34).”

When this religiously charged notion of private property combined with Bacon’s rhetoric of recovery through science and technology it produced a powerful bourgeoisie with an almost insatiable desire and faculty to change the landscape in profound ways. As Marx points out, “the arriving Europeans perceived the underdeveloped environment of the ‘New World’ in the context of their collective power to transform it (1999: 327).” At the core of the new settlers’ intentions for the land was a positive concept of ‘progress’ as the instrument of environmental transformation and the means to make profit. This internalized ideal is evident as one early Wisconsin settler described the excitement of plowing in his memoirs

“Every inch was a hard pull--often a struggle...[but] furrow by furrow, we triumphed over the wilderness...There is a deep thrill in all such effort--it causes a leaping of the heart incomprehensible to one who has not had the experience (Ragatz 1935).”

The new found devotion to science and technology combined with the desire to own private property brought about an increasing notion of landscape as a commodity. Like any commodity, once a price was set for it a market was created and that land could be manipulated in order to maximize profit when traded away. In this way the market culture of the settlers had dramatic ecological consequences on the Prairie and oak savannas of the land south of Lake Wingra.

### *Commodifying Nature*

The initial steps to truly commodifying the landscape around the Arboretum came in the 1830’s with the original land survey performed by the federal General Land Office (GLO) (Appendix 3). The goal of the GLO was to divide the vast acreage of the state into sections and sub-sections that could be priced out and sold, in order to encourage settlement of the area. This grid pattern, imposed upon the landscape, would have far reaching effects that would change the look of the land as well as the meanings that people attached to it forever.

The surveyor’s notes of that original land survey, undertaken in 1834 by Orson Lyon, are very telling. These notes are more or less analytical lists that chronicle the surveyor’s observations of the land as he marked off sections of the grid (Appendix 2). They were used to document a given area’s value defined by its commodities, such as timber, and to evaluate the land’s fertility and ability to support

agriculture (Schein 2010: 234). Lyon's description of the land now occupied by the arboretum (sections 27, 28, 33 and 34) as "rolling and second rate land" speaks to the fact that early visitors to this area didn't find the value in it that say the Winnebago did, or that the value they saw was defined by the commodities they could extract from it to sell at market.

Seeing the landscape only in terms of commodities isolates individual members of an ecosystem, turning them into extractable units and undermining the importance of the ecosystem as an interconnected system. It was this kind of misunderstanding that differentiated the white settlers' relationship with the world around them from the Winnebago's and caused a major disconnect between them and their natural environment. According to William Cronon, "more than anything else, it was the treatment of land and property as commodities traded at market that distinguished English conceptions of ownership from Indian ones (1983: 75)." By parceling out separate sections of land to be bought and "improved" upon, the GLO was reinforcing the idea of the 'Recovery' narrative by making the land a commodity. The settlers saw the acquisition and transformation of land as a way to accumulate capital via the market. As Cronon points out

"It was the attachment of property in land to a marketplace, and the accumulation of its value in a society with institutionalized ways of recognizing abstract wealth, that committed the [settlers] to an expanding economy that was ecologically transformative (1983: 79)."

Subsequent plat maps through the 19th and early 20th centuries show how, over time, those parcels around Lake Wingra were divided and sub-divided, transforming the prairie into farms, fields, and fences. Initially it is revealing to note how the landscape goes from one of minimal demarcation in the original survey (Appendix 3) - just the PLSS section grid and its numbers - to one highly segmented and acknowledging twelve different land owners by 1861 (Appendix 4). Here we are witnessing the transformation of land into capital under new divisions of property, designated in the plats under such titles as "D. B. Vilas," "J.W. Gorham," and "S. Bartlett." It is interesting to note how these parcel names represent white settlers' possessions compared to the Winnebago's use of names to indicate an area's use such as 'place where the turtle comes up.'

It is also worth noting the way in which the area that would eventually become the Arboretum cycles from little demarcation in the 1830's (Appendix 3) to one that is highly subdivided by many owners in 1890 (Appendix 5) and then returns to relatively little demarcation by 1940 (Appendix 8). This observation doesn't look to downplay the role of land ownership still inherent in the landscape but it does speak to the unity of purpose under the new title "Arboretum" which now reflects this lands use rather than simple possession.

Another plat observation highlighting the settlers shifting relationship with nature is the appearance of the railroad line through the area by 1890 (Appendix 5). This is a symbol that represents the direct connection between the domestic grain that D.D. Bryant was growing on his 240 acre farm and the market. All over the county the rail was bringing the market to the farmer, encouraging greater production, larger fields, and greater profits. It also fostered a sense of human autonomy from the natural world on which they depended. This kind of disconnection between people and the constraints of their environment would eventually manifest in some of the worst ecological disasters known to man, notably the Dust Bowl.

The changes in meaning attached to the landscape, evident in the transition between Indian occupation and white settlement, are representative of the Arboretum as a whole. It is a landscape in constant flux both physically and interpretively. What the Arboretum has meant to different generations and cultures has been markedly different. Further, its landscape is covered with forms that recall these transitions. As we move further into the twentieth century we begin to see new landscape changes that represent this ever-changing relationship between humans and their environment. As a result of the growing needs of Madison in the early 1900's, we find yet another meaning imposed on the landscape in the form of a new residential development called Lake Forest.

## The Lake Forest Plan



Figure 7: A Lake Forest Sign  
From the *Lake Forester*, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 1920, p3.  
UW-Archives Arboretum-38/6/5 Box 1

With the arrival of the 20th century came an increased demand for housing which had grown to the point where it overshadowed the value of nature. This led to the creation of Lake Forest Plan, an elaborately planned community whose goal was to offer potential residents a piece of nature while helping satisfy Madison's demand for housing. In his 1981 thesis, Jeffery Groy examines the growing concern about the number of people moving to the area, and the lack of available housing. These concerns were warranted as his population and industry research showed that the Madison area population had increased over fifty-percent in the years between 1910 and 1920. He also provides that industry in Madison increased by fifty-percent as well (Groy 1981: 10).

Understanding why an area is experiencing growth is essential for developers as it allows them to plan according to demographic interests instead of presuming what people would like, and then

disappointing them. Groy hypothesized that Madison's growth was largely related to the adjacent lakes, the university, the State Capitol, industries within Madison, the railroad as well as the efforts of the Madison Park Pleasure Drive Association (Groy 1981: 8). From the modern perspective this list seems to cover a wide range of influences, almost all of them taken for granted; however if you attempt to view these factors from the perspective of a potential 1920s resident, then these become important factors influencing your choice of where to settle. Many landscape developers sought to offer their solution to this growing problem but one unique approach to quell the housing demand was presented by the Lake Forest Land Company.

As with many proposed development plans there were problems facing the Lake Forest Land Company's plan to alleviate the housing concerns in Madison. One such concern for the plan was the public perception of the land as being a marsh, and that it is, and possibly always will be useless (Groy 1981: 15). However, as Groy points out, the public had seen something similar with Brittingham Park which had previously been marsh (similar to the area in the plans) and had then undergone recent transformation. The fact that this land was seemingly unsuited for society's use was both a benefit and drawback to the Lake Forest Company. On the one hand the land was not usable, so no one was going to argue with its development, but on the other hand, the public notion of the land meant that he had to work harder to sell people on the Lake Forest idea.



Figure 8: An artist's drawing of the proposed Lake Forest Plan. A dramatic difference from the deciduous forest there today. Weisner (unknown date); UW-Archives Arboretum-38/6/5 Box 1

Chandler Chapman's impressive approach to planning Lake Forest clearly captivated Groy as he went to great length to describe the steps that Chapman used in drafting the Lake Forest plan. Groy felt that Chapman knew the problems he was facing, and as a result attempted a highly scientific approach to resolving the problems (while something to be taken for granted now, bear in mind this was nearly 100 years ago). Chapman first performed a detailed study of Madison's available housing and then projected its growth and housing needs. Groy makes a note of Chapman's 1914 estimate "of Madison's population in 1920 was 39,775 persons. This differed by only 1,397 persons from the actual Madison census count of 38,378 people (Groy 1981: 16)." Given the rapid growth of the time and the available technology, this is an impressive estimate, and also gives credence to Chapman's scientific approach of development. The culmination of Chapman's research was the Lake Forest plan, with the appropriate number of lots needed to help the city through its growth.

Lake Forest wasn't the only upcoming development at that time. An important advantage over competing developments was the amenities that were to be offered in Lake Forest. Groy makes reference of "street car service, paved streets and sidewalks, electricity, gas, water and sewer service, fire protection, schools, parks and recreational grounds (Groy 1981: 18)." He adds that these services "were to be properly supervised." This level of attention to detail by the planners is rather impressive, giving the impression that they had thought of everything and that the idea of a grand new community was clearly more important to these planners than any notion of 'nature'.

By 1915 the Lake Forest was open for business and had secured 380 acres (Appendix 6) adjacent to 40 acres owned by an associate of Chapman's (Groy 1981: 34). By 1931, they had procured 420 acres (Appendix 7). The Lake Forest Co. was clearly a labor of love for those involved, as apparent by the meticulous attention to detail. The founders certainly had done their homework.

Never heard of the Lake Forest plan or the Lake Forest Land Company? Many would assume the cause to be unsuitable land, and perhaps that would have been the cause for failure of the Lake Forest Land Company if it had continued on. In fact the reason rests with the fraudulent dealings for their financier, Victor H. Arnold the president of the Madison Bond Company. In 1921 the bond company responsible for the mortgage bonds had failed; the Lake Forest Company had filed suit, and ended up being the recipient of a counter-suit (Groy 1981: 40). Despite claims to be victim of a conspiracy plot (New York Times, Dec. 28th 1922), in the years following the bond company's failure Arnold was convicted of fraud (Groy 1981: 40).

The remnants of the Lake Forest plan have since become referred to as the "Lost City" in nearly all occurrences, and occasionally the Lost City stirs up public interest when the Arboretum Staff gives the annual Lost City Tour. On October 31st, 2010, we were able to attend a UW-Arboretum sponsored tour where approximately 70 people had shown up to get a glimpse of what remains of Lake Forest. Along

with the weathering concrete there is still a good portion of the development between Carver and Martin Street.

## **The creation of the Arboretum**

### *Change in late nineteenth century attitudes toward nature*

As Madison was transforming from a late nineteenth century small settlement to an increasingly, industrialized twentieth century city, a speedy process facilitated by the city's small size and well connected railroad services, there seemed to be little thought given among its citizens to the cultural significance of ancient relics such as Indian mounds and spiritual grounds. For example, local farmers and home-owners - either indifferent or oblivious as to what the ground had represented in the past - would allow cattle and horses to graze haphazardly, ultimately damaging the land (Levitan 2006: 155). As it were, most people in and around Madison, and Wisconsin, seemed to show a lack of interest in the nature surrounding them. What little was said about feelings toward the environment were past glimpses of wilderness, in literature written by aging nostalgic pioneers, all wondering if that idyllic past would ever be eclipsed by what Madison was shaping out to be. (Mollenhoff 2006: 40 & 124).

However, those pioneers had their fingers on the pulse of American environmentalism, as this type of romantic writing was in style at the time. Expanding on the writings of philosophers such as Bacon and Locke, the late 19th century had begun to see a change in attitude towards conservancy of nature and environment, promoted by a wide variety of philosophers, environmentalists, and artists. Henry David Thoreau, writer and transcendentalist, warned against the distancing from and destruction of nature that the materialistic industrial society was bringing with it: "But lo! men have become the tools of their tools (1854: 30)."

Romantic painters such as Thomas Cole and Frederic Edwin Church were capturing nostalgic, but realistic, images of nature on their canvasses. Environmentalists such as John Muir, Frederick Jackson Turner, and George Perkins Marsh were writing about the importance of preservation and conservation, commenting on the rising new era of industrialism, seeking to make people stop and think about the implications it might have on nature (Cronon 1991: 97). Marsh, one of the first environmentalists, observed the damage done to the land by farmers in his home state of Vermont - very much the same disregard to nature as had been occurring in Madison - and, while acknowledging the need for our use of natural environment, provided that man is destined to disturb nature not as vandals, but as stewards of earth:

“Man has too long forgotten that the earth was given to him for usufruct alone, not for consumption, still less for profligate waste (1864: 36).”

Although at times just as overly romantic as the nostalgic pioneers of Wisconsin, these works were proving to promote critical thinking towards the environment. It was in a sense thinkers and philosophers, artists, and scholars inspiring each other, their desires reflecting a changing narrative in people’s relationship with the landscape. The old ideas of recovery through the domination of a brutal wilderness were beginning to give way to ideas of reverence for the beauty and sublimity of nature.

### *John Olin and the MPPDA*

While the eventual creation of the UW-Arboretum was very much the combined effort of many peoples’ work, studies, and ideas toward nature preservation, there are some men in the early twentieth century Madison history that more than others were vital in the promotion of this change of mindset of its residents. Their vision was dominated by new desires for green spaces and recreational land, a reflection of the growing local and national love and respect for nature

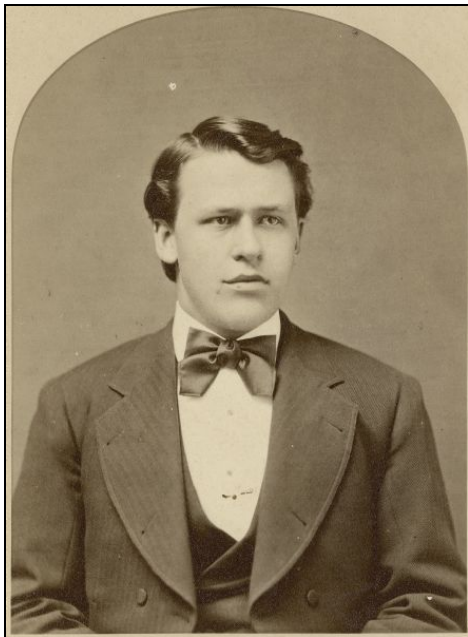


Figure 9: John Olin  
Wisconsin Historical Society; ID: 33713

One of these men, and one of the first to actually work towards a greener Madison was John Olin (Fig. 9). In the late nineteenth century, he became an important figure in promoting ideas of open areas, parks, and the maintenance of natural beauty, trying to provide support for an alternative to industrial growth (Mollenhoff 2006: 309). In 1894 he helped form the Madison Park and Pleasure Drive Association (MPPDA), the purpose of which was to maintain scenic routes along the lakes, as well as develop more park areas. Madison’s population was greatly increasing in the late 19th century, but there still remained only a single park, and in an effort to make Madison greener, Olin and the MPPDA helped creating a movement, “the City Beautiful” - its main goal being to set standards for future beautification of the city.

During the seventeen years following its formation - from 1894 to 1911 - the MPPDA developed and expanded park areas in the city from 3.5 to 229 acres, following the standards formulated in the movement (Mollenhoff 2006: 312-313). The main idea in this effort, Olin stated, was to plant a seed in the mind of

the general public, saying that natural elements were crucial in the city in order to not only enhance living standards, but also to gain future generations, who would be thankful “for having made possible the ownership and enjoyment of these lands”. Olin could probably feel the seedling starting to grow, as the number of people visiting the parks steadily increased in the early 20th century, and he most certainly saw his fellow Madisonians starting to appreciate nature more (Levitan 2006: 144).

### *John Nolen: Madison, A Model City*

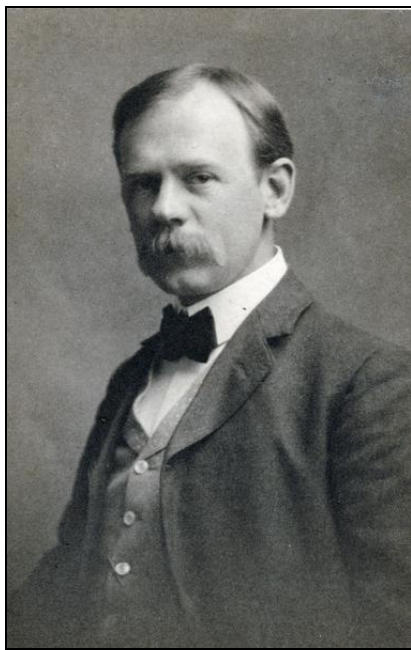


Figure 10: John Nolen  
Wisconsin Historical Society; ID: 12506

In 1908, at the height of the MPPDA beautification and preservation process, a landscape architect was hired by the City of Madison in order to work out a grand plan for the future development of the growing city. Handpicked by John Olin, John Nolen (Fig. 10), a freshly graduated urban planner with an impressive and growing resume, began his observations. Drawing from his experience from working for a broad variety of cities - such as San Diego, CA and Savannah, GA - he emphasized the importance of recreational green areas. Mainly influenced by trips and expeditions to Europe, particularly Germany and Switzerland, he was taking on a more European approach in his methods, “the City Functional”, trying to stray away from the type of urban planning that had created, in his mind, an overly industrial east coast and incorporate a more functional blend of man-made construction and nature. (Mollenhoff 2006: 324).

“As a matter of fact, the most ambitious proposals for American cities in no wise equal the actual achievements of the cities of the Old World. All that we are beginning to think of doing here has been for decades realized fact in European cities. Thus there is in Europe, especially in Germany and Switzerland, better provision for city life, for business, for health, for pleasure and all at less cost to the tax payer. Consider, for example, the lake cities of Switzerland, especially those that are capitals of cantons or seats of universities! Do they not present a perfectly practicable ideal of what Madison might readily be? Lucerne, Lugano, Constance, Zurich, Neuchatel, Lausanne, Geneva, - these and other Swiss cities may be named as an inspiration and guide for Madison. Examine their city plans, their city ordinances, or better still, walk their streets and public places. Without exception, we should find a happy development of lake frontages for public use; a rational street system; a freedom from nuisances; a wise and reasonable regulation of railroads and private buildings; the careful planting and protection of street trees; an abundance of recreation areas and public gardens of all sorts; practical and

beautiful sites for public buildings, art galleries, museums, and music halls; comfortable and sanitary housing, and withal a prudent anticipation of future needs (Nolen 1911: 146-147).”

In 1911, three years after his arrival in Madison, Nolen presented his plans in the book “Madison: A Model City”, determining the city could “establish a new standard for city-making in the U.S.” (Nolen 1911: 143). In it, Nolen described 17 important points to implement, many of which described a great need for park developments. One key point suggested the significance of a university-controlled arboretum, an idea Nolen had successfully put forward in previous plans for other cities he had worked for (Nolen 1911: 70; Mollenhoff 2006: 332).

“The most serious lack is that of garden and landscape features. A University, especially a State University devoted largely to horticultural and agricultural interests, should naturally recognize the scientific, practical, and aesthetic value of the beautiful, open-air laboratories that have proved so useful in other places. The University of Wisconsin should have a first class botanical garden / .. /; a water garden and aquarium; a good-sized arboretum, say, 200 acres, / .. /; a University forest / .. /; a summer engineering camp on the shores of Lake Mendota; and a University pleasure garden / .. / (Nolen 1911: 74-75).”

He described the area surrounding Lake Wingra as optimal for the placement of this arboretum, highlighting it in the book’s accompanying map, in which the grand scheme of Madison was pictured (Appendix 9). He envisioned careful maintenance of the lake’s natural beauty of and to simply surround it with parks and connecting walkways for the general public to enjoy (Nolen 1911: 115 & 150).



Figure 11: Michael Olbrich  
Olbrich Botanical Gardens; Uncataloged

As it were, in the twenty years following his presentation, and much to his chagrin, few of Nolen’s ideas were implemented. He had however, just like John Olin, planted another seed in the Madisonian mind, providing a new meaning of nature and preservation in the form of the plan for an arboretum. And so, as his suggestions were now slowly processing in the public mind, the traditionally energetic and articulate citizens of Madison started to organize several new civic-betterment groups (Sachse 1961: 118). One of these groups was the Madison Parks Foundation, formed in 1922 by Michael Olbrich (Fig. 11). Olbrich, an early admirer of John Nolen’s work, intended to push forward further

implementations of his ideas, including the acquisition of the land surrounding the southern shores of Lake Wingra for the creation of an Arboretum. As the chairman of the Madison Parks foundation, and additionally as a member of the University Board of Regents, he became one of the first real spokesmen for the Arboretum. Following Nolen's suggestions, the intention was to turn the area into public wilderness to be used for both research and recreation, under the maintenance of the University of Wisconsin, and in the early 1930s, the Madison Parks Foundation and the university slowly began the arduous quest of acquiring land parcels surrounding the Lake (Sachse 1974: 15; Mollenhoff 2006: 334; Levitan 2006: 243).

### *Arboretum Land Acquisition*

With the onset of the economic depression and Olbrich's untimely death in 1929, plans for the Arboretum delayed. Many who had previously pledged money to the Arboretum fund were asking for liberation from their commitment (Sachse 1965: 20). However, the vision that Olbrich planted in so many minds would not be lost. Community leaders and members, including nurserymen, conservationists, foresters, boy scouts, and nature lovers all over the state of Wisconsin, worked together to generate the support needed to create the University Arboretum. This support would come in the form of land purchases and gifts, committee planning, and enthusiasm from the public.

Joseph W. Jackson revived Olbrich's vision, believing the Arboretum had significant value to add to the Madison area. Jackson kicked off the laborious and long-drawn-out land acquisition process. In 1932, after working with many university and city officials, funders, and landowners, Jackson arranged the first land acquisition. It was the 245-acre Nelson farm on the southwest shore of Lake Wingra (Appendix 7). The following spring the university acquired an adjacent farm, bringing the total to almost 500 acres (Meine 2009: 1). These initial land gifts and purchases for the purpose of an Arboretum were very significant steps as they sparked interest among the public (Sachse 1961: 119). Without this interest it is likely that the area now known as the Arboretum would look much different, possibly with housing developments or farms.

The University of Wisconsin Arboretum would be officially dedicated as such in June of 1934. At this time the total land area consisted of about 500 acres. Much more land was acquired in order to make the Arboretum what it is today. A major period of acquisition occurred during the decade before WWII (Appendix 8). Some of the land was gained by the means of a gift from the owner, others were complicated real estate transactions (Sachse 1965: 35). One very generous gift was that of Louis Gardner, a \$15,000 190 acre marshy chunk of land. Today, now named Gardner Marsh (Appendix 1), this wetland lies on the west side of Lake Wingra. Thanks to many more purchases, negotiations, and gifts the University Arboretum currently stands at an impressive 1200 acres.

The University of Wisconsin Arboretum had been shaped, explored, and planned by many people of varying backgrounds and interests. Once land was acquired for the Arboretum, much work had to be done in order to shape the landscape back to what Wisconsin looked like before major settlement in the area. The Civilian Conservation Corps would prove to play a major role in the development of the Arboretum.

## Civilian Conservation Corps

In 1933 the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) were established to “help relieve poverty and provide training for young men by employing them in conservation work on the nation's forests, parks, and farms (Salmond 1965: 75).” As a result of the stock market crash of 1929, over 3 million were unemployed, and by 1933 that figure had grown to over 14 million (Ermentrout 1982: 2). Young men were writing President Roosevelt telling him their stories and asking for his help, some of the men were homeless, others had lost parents in World War I (Oliver and Dudley 1937: 1). In an attempt to start addressing the issue, President Roosevelt, in a message to Congress on March 21st, 1933 wrote, “I estimate that 250,000 men can be given temporary employment by early summer if you give me the authority to proceed within two weeks (Ermentrout 1982: 3).” By World War II the CCC had employed over 3 million young men (Ermentrout 1982: viii).

The formation of the CCC played an important role in the development of the Arboretum. As Nancy Sachse mentions, after the university acquired lands for its arboretum, it lacked the funds to sufficiently develop the lands to meet the plans for the arboretum (1974: 29). As a result she mentions



Figure 12: Camp Madison at night (1938)  
UW Arboretum Archives, Uncataloged

Gallistel's letters to Longenecker appealing for the construction of a transient camp and work for no more than 350 men not to exceed two years in duration. This important agreement provided the university with a means to accomplish its goals for the arboretum despite the lack of funds.

On July 15th, 1935, the Company 2670 of the Civilian Conservation Corps was formed from Company 656 located at Camp Honey Creek in West Allis, Wisconsin (Arboretum Argus Apr. 1936: 3). Company 2670 was to reside at Camp Madison, the Civilian Conservation Corps Camp located within the Arboretum's grounds. By April of 1936, there were approximately 150 CCC enrollees at Camp Madison maintaining the lands (Arboretum Argus April 1936: 7).

In a rather surprising continuance of events, it was learned during a tour of the remaining Camp Madison facilities (Murray 2010), that one of the barracks (the "Teaching Barracks") is used from time to time as a classroom for day camps focused on conservation and ecology. It is rather amazing that the space used to house young men learning about conservation roughly 80 years ago is still being used for a similar function.

The Camp in Madison provided work for young men in the time of the great depression. The men earned a single dollar per day, and each month they were required to send twenty-five dollars off to their families (Murray 2010). However, the camp was far more than a little bit of income in exchange for hard work.

The Arboretum Argus, a newsletter published by Company 2670 highlights the many facets of camp life. In the first issue, Eugene F. Otto the company's Senior Foreman introduced the newsletter with an article for the young men about why they should not direct all of their questions to him (Arboretum Argus Apr. 1936: 1). An important thing to keep in mind is that many of these young men had little understanding of the inner workings of the camp; I expect that Otto's article helped many of the young men get better acquainted with the camp, as well as allowing them to feel more comfortable asking questions of other people within the camp.

The newsletter also served as an outlet to explain to the men, why the work going on at the arboretum was important, and what their work would accomplish. For example, Joseph Elfner wrote about the problems caused during the winter by rabbits, namely that they will eat the bark of several trees when other sources for food are covered by snow. (Arboretum Argus Apr. 1936: 4) Joseph also mentions an initiative supported by the Wisconsin Conservation Committee to use live traps to distribute some of the Arboretum's cottontails to other parts of the state where the rabbit population was depleted.

In an article about some of the camp 'rookies,' James Rautio, a new member of the camp who had recently arrived from Detroit, MI, said:

"Each and every one of us agree that our new home is one of the best; if not the best. What impressed us most, however, was its excellent location." ... "Well, we certainly were not disappointed (Arboretum Argus May 1936: 4)."

Through his quote, Rautio was able to give us a sense of just how strongly the men felt about their camp. This also reaffirms the idea that the young men were settling in well at their new home although this experience was the first time many of them had been away from home.

Another opportunity for the men in Camp Madison was education. Clair Sponam discusses the Camp Educational Program, remarking that he was able to study subjects such as auto mechanics, first aid, and typing (Arboretum Argus Apr. 1937: 3). Clair further goes on to mention his appreciation of the camp educational advisor for his work in arranging reduced rates for enrollees at the University of Wisconsin. The value that CCC workers found in Arboretum were the very beginnings of what the place would come to be in the future.

## **Toward a Land Ethic through Restoration, Education, and Recreation**

### *What is an Arboretum?*

Traditionally an arboretum is a collection of trees. The University of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum does not exactly fit this definition, as the creators of this arboretum had a different vision. On June 17th, 1934 at the initial dedication of the Arboretum Aldo Leopold defined this vision as a reciprocal relationship between civilization and the landscape.

"This, in a nutshell, is the function of the Arboretum: a reconstructed sample of old Wisconsin, to serve as a bench mark, a starting point in the long and laborious job of building a permanent and mutually beneficial relationship between civilized men and a civilized landscape. (Jordan 1984: 5)"

Because of these goals articulated by Leopold, the Arboretum really was committed both to the ecology of the land as well as to the betterment of human civilization. Olbrich's hope was that "this Arboretum ...will bring back into the lives of all confronted by a dismal industrial tangle, whose forces we so little comprehend, something of the grace and beauty which nature intended all to share" (Sachse 1960: 123).

The Dust Bowl Era had cast a shadow over the country, serving as an example of the calamity that would carry on if humankind continued to live as though we had no link to the natural world. The goal of fostering a land ethic through restoration practices at the UW-Arboretum was an important step in strengthening the community's relationship with nature through stewardship and appreciation of the land (Jordan 1985: 24). This stewardship attitude was seen earlier in this landscape story by the Native

American cultures, and now was renewed and applied to the Arboretum's mission. Through restoration, education, and recreational opportunity the University of Wisconsin Arboretum fosters a land ethic that in turn continues the cycle of ethical use and exploration of our natural environment.

### *Restoration Ecology, Research, and Education*

The Arboretum is a place to study, research, and learn about Wisconsin plant and animal communities (*Arboretum News* 1952: 2). Often recognized as being the birthplace of restoration ecology, the Arboretum has continued to be a place for research and restoration over the decades. Restoration ecology brought a whole new level of meaning to the landscape. Preservation and exploitation activities will continue to be features of the landscapes around us, but restoration would become a third approach to land use and management (Aber & Jordan 1985: 399).

“The primary management goal of the University of Wisconsin Arboretum is to rehabilitate or artificially establish as many of native Wisconsin biotic communities as possible. As a result, the Madison Arboretum is different than most Arboreta in that it is a collection of communities rather than horticultural plantings (Anderson 1972: 1).”



Figure 13: Group of people studying the prairie.  
Source: Ryan Kelly

Curtis Prairie, a 60-acre prairie in the central arboretum, was really one of the first prototypes for ecologic restoration. Prairie restoration had never been done at this time, so this undertaking was quite revolutionary. A number of biologists and UW professors were involved with this project, namely Norman Fassett, Aldo Leopold, William Longenecker, Ted Sperry, and John Curtis. The Civilian Conservation Corps also contributed to the restoration of prairie in the Arboretum. They brought in sod from local prairies in order to obtain a mixture of prairie species for use in the restoration process (Anderson 1972: 1). Together they developed a restoration technique that would set a model for others (Jordan 2010: 223).

“...the idea is that restoration can help raise and answer ecological questions synthetically, by reconstruction, rather than by description and dissection (Aber & Jordan 1985: 399).”

This principle, of learning about the ecology of Wisconsin land through restoration would become the foundation of the Arboretum as a place for research and education.

Full of history, the Arboretum has many opportunities for cultural and historical education as well. One may walk through and study this place in order to learn about Madison's past. Today many different tours are given on various aspects of the Arboretum's rich history in order to educate the public. For example, one could learn about the Effigy Mounds, the CCC, and the Lost City during these tours.

This cultural history aspect to the Arboretum was not always supported however. In the 1920's Charles Brown proposed to display a native Indian canoe that had been dredged from the marsh beside the shoreline of Lake Wingra. However, many scientists shot this idea down – the Arboretum was not to be taken over by historic relics that may impede the goal of restoration (Sachse 1965: 25). Today however it seems that the cultural and historic artifacts in the landscape add to the value of the Arboretum, as many people in the Madison community are very interested in what the landscape once looked like, what the land was used for, and how it came to be the Arboretum.

### *Recreation*

Research and education maintains a dominant presence in the Arboretum, however there most definitely is a group of users that do not use the Arboretum for formal educational purposes at all. These recreational opportunities are still very important to the continuing success of the Arboretum. The greater community can be exposed to the natural areas and ecological communities that exist in the Arboretum boundaries through an activity they enjoy. This process supports the Arboretum's greater mission fostering the land ethic.



Figure 14: Recreation in the Arboretum.  
Source: Ryan Kelly

Date	Approximate # of FOA Members
1990	1,700
2005	3,000
2010	2,700

Table 1: Friends of the Arboretum (FOA) Members  
Source: Linda Bishop, UW Arboretum

Rules have been implemented within Arboretum boundaries to assure the land will be protected and respected. The Arboretum is not to be confused with a park. Activities not allowed in the Arboretum include flower picking, having a campfire, or loose dogs; friendly signage will remind patrons of these rules.

### *Public Support and Stewardship*

Support from the public has been shown throughout the entire lifeline of the Arboretum. Even though the planning was not always easy, and compromises had to be made between leaders and committee members, the Arboretum has proven to be a success. In 1972 the Friends of the Arboretum (FOA) program began. Friends of the Arboretum (FOA) is a non-profit organization that provides both financial and volunteer support for the Arboretum, and also helps the Arboretum reach its mission through community outreach and education. Membership of FOA grew quickly after its establishment, and by 1990 there were over 1,700 members. Peak membership was reached in 2005 at nearly 3,000 members. Currently, there is about 2,700 Friends of the Arboretum (Table 1). The

volunteer stewardship program began in 1993 at the Arboretum. Volunteers have proven to be an invaluable presence in the Arboretum. These programs are especially significant because it attests to the value that the Madison community found in participation of restoration and stewardship activities. The continued success of the Arboretum greatly depends on the work of the committed volunteers and members of FOA that so dearly care for this land and institution.

## **Conclusion**

The area now known as the University of Wisconsin Arboretum has changed significantly over time. These changes demonstrate the shifting relationship between society and nature through time. This changing relationship is often reflected in the landscape. Early in the Arboretum's history the Winnebago's close relationship and dependence on the land were expressed in the form of mound building and subsistence hunting and agriculture. In the period of white settlement the landscape was transformed under a new narrative defined by domination and market culture. The love of science and

technology combined with a religiously sanctified, nature-dominating rhetoric heralded the shift from a relationship of intimate dependence on the ecological community to one of exploit and commodification.

In the early 1900's the belief in 'progress' and 'expansion' continued to shape the landscape around the Arboretum as the Lake Forest Community was poised to become one of Madison's elite communities. However, new ideas concerning people's relationship with nature were beginning to creep into the social consciousness. Early visionaries of a 'greener Madison', such as Olin and Nolen, influenced by the likes of George Perkins Marsh and John Muir, believed it imperative that the expanding city and its inhabitants have access to 'natural' areas such as parks and an Arboretum. Further, the CCC's work on the Arboretum had a significant influence on those men who volunteered. Their time in the Arboretum fostered a closer relationship with the land on which they worked and reflected society's growing concern with their increasingly distant relationship with nature.

Today we see the reflections of those who envisioned a university Arboretum for the purpose of restoration, research, education and recreation. In an afternoon at the University of Wisconsin Arboretum one can observe a wide variety of activity, as well as a variety of landscapes. Whether you are moving through Curtis Prairie, Wingra Woods, or Longenecker Gardens there will be runners, bikers, walkers, hikers, volunteers, researchers, educators, and staff using the Arboretum for different reasons (See Observation Data in the Appendix). This speaks to the multiplicity and complexity of meanings attached to this place. This complexity is brought to the surface in the irony that many see the Arboretum as a representation of a Wisconsin landscape before it was manipulated by humans. However, as we have seen, this is a landscape that has always been manipulated by people and always will be. It is a landscape that is always in flux, both physically and interpretively, and is place that will always reflect our changing relationships with the natural world.

## **Our Personal Accounts and Experience with the Arboretum**

### *Ryan*

It was a cool day but warm in the sun. I was walking along one of the many grassy corridors that twist through Curtis Prairie searching for the perfect fall photograph. I came across a man in the path, hands on his hips, shirt sleeves rolled up above his elbows and shaking his head. His back was turned to me and was unaware of my presence. He swabbed the sweat from the back of his neck with a tattered red handkerchief and I took note that he had thoroughly soaked through his shirt. He was saying something to someone on the ground in front of him. I could not see as the narrow path and the 60 acre sea of golden Curtis Prairie grass all around us restricted my view. I cleared my throat and he turned with a start. "Oh you startled me!" he said moving aside so that I could pass. I apologized and made myself skinny as I squeezed by. It was then that I realized that the 'someone' he had been talking to was actually

a large boulder protruding out of the center of the path. There was a long pry bar still wedged against it, sticking straight up like a flag pole and another lying beside a shovel on the ground, obviously the cause of the man's toil. I turned and asked him what he was doing and he explained that he and his father, who had recently passed, had been a volunteer at the Arboretum for years and that he was there in memory of him. His job today included trail maintenance and the removal of one decidedly stubborn boulder. I found his story moving and offered to lend a hand. He gladly accepted and introduced himself as John.

As we pried and dug that boulder I thought about the meaning of this place. John and I had come there that day for two totally different reasons; I to photograph and he to pay tribute to his father. However, we had come together under a unified love of nature and the Arboretum to make a small difference. As we pried the boulder loose and attempted to lift it, the mud that had accumulated up to our elbows prevented us from getting a solid grip and it kept falling back into the hole. I thought of all the sweat that had been shed to make this landscape what it was. From Indian mounds to prairie restoration, humans had been leaving their mark on this place for thousands of years. Because of this, getting at what the Arboretum means is difficult to unearth. Like the boulder it is buried under many different layers, and if you really want to get at it you have to dig. And once you think you've got a handle on it, it slips away. Finally, as we wheeled the boulder down the path I settled on the idea that the Arboretum means something a little different to everyone. What we all seem to have in common is a desire to foster a closer relationship with the natural world. City streets just aren't enough. Sometimes you just have to get out and dig.

#### *Andreas*

Rising early on a Sunday morning, drinking coffee to wake up further, scarfing down a scone, taking a ride out to the Arboretum in the sunny stillness and going for a long walk along a quiet forest trail, enjoying the beauty and tranquility, walking towards the city, entering a morning-rowdy restaurant, eating brunch, returning home refreshed. Waking up Monday morning for another hectic week...

#### *Matt*

Overall I found the arboretum to be quite an impressive landscape, after all where else can you find so many different relics of past? What impressed me wasn't so much the discovery of a long-lost community in my very own backyard, or even the beauty of the arboretum itself. Those two things are quite spectacular on their own, and nothing to scoff at; however for me it was something more unique, more personal.

For me, hearing the story of the CCC and the men brought back memories of the time I spent as a sailor in the US Navy. On the tour as we walked through the CCC barracks and other buildings, I was able to mentally picture the regimented lives of these young men by drawing upon my own memories of

similar times and activities. After discovering the Arboretum Argus, the one thing that stood out above all the other similarities was the camaraderie that these men experienced while they lived and worked closely with one another.

### *Molly*

There are many great biking and running routes in Madison. You can go along lake shore, around Lake Monona, or along any of the bike paths. For me one of the best spots to go is through the UW Arboretum. I love running through the Arboretum. There is something refreshing and empowering about seeing all the different ecological communities that have been restored in this area. Just by running through you get more and more interested in the Arboretum. You become curious and want to explore more trails and even get involved in the volunteering effort. That is what happened with me at least. At first I only ran through Arboretum drive on the pavement. Eventually, I got more curious and started picking out a few trails to walk and jog along. Finally, I showed up on a Saturday morning this past summer to volunteer from 9am-12pm. We mainly spent the time pulling invasive species such as garlic mustard out of the earth.

The main intention of the Arboretum was not provide recreational opportunities to Madison residents, but many people do find themselves in the Arboretum simply to enjoy the outdoors, like me with running. The prospect of a great recreational experience brings in many visitors, and eventually creates awareness and an appreciation for the land within the individual. It seems to be this is an invaluable piece to the Arboretum's mission of fostering a land ethic.

## **Future Research**

### *More Focused Research*

The possibilities for future research in this project are far reaching. Given the opportunity of unlimited time much more research could be done. Primarily, more time would allow for a more focused and in depth investigation of our separate vignettes. We have discovered that once you get your feet wet, so to speak, in an environmental history you really just want to jump in. We have realized that each snapshot we have focused on in our research could be a whole project in itself. Conversely, we have also come to appreciate the fact that landscape histories can benefit from a wide breadth. It is necessary to have an understanding of how and why peoples' relationships with nature have changed through time in order to attempt to explain those relationships. However, the interest that our research has sparked leaves more to be desired.

### *Observation*

More time would similarly afford us the opportunity to do more observation. Although our observations do point to general trends in weekend use, it would be beneficial to have more data during week days. Also, it would be interesting to be able to monitor individual hiking trails and sections of the Arboretum to get a more accurate idea of what areas are used most often and when. Added funding would also help this analysis. At just over 1200 acres the Arboretum is very difficult to monitor with just four people. A little funding would go a long way towards more detailed observation and a comprehensive analysis.

## **Methods**

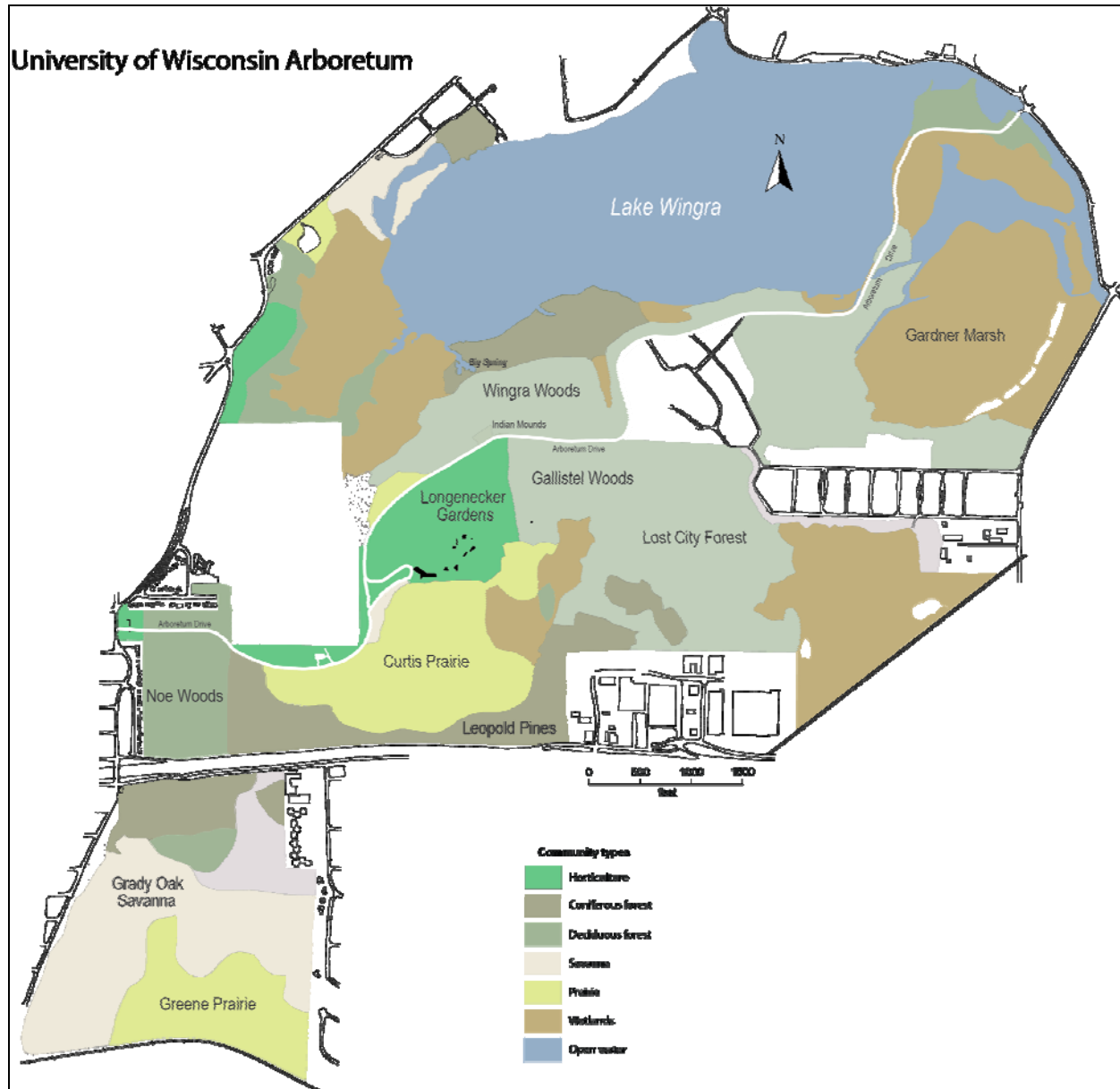
In order to address our thesis, which states the area now known as the UW Arboretum has been a place of changing landscapes and changing meanings throughout time, we utilized a variety of sources and methods. Both primary and secondary sources were used in order to evaluate the Arboretum's changes over time. Meaning analysis was an important piece of this evaluation as we explored different types of sources. "Meaning... is very much shaped by the medium through which it is expressed." (Gomez and Jones 2010: p393).

Historical texts, scholarly articles, and books were essential resources, adding to our knowledge base for this landscape history project. By looking back into time we can place the physical changes of the Arboretum landscape in the context of social events and prominent ideas of that time. While reading these texts, we needed to consider not only our own biases, but the biases that are perhaps present in the perspective of the author.

Maps, imagery, and land surveys represent physical changes through time as well as the ideas and attitudes that were present in order to create that landscape. The images associated with the landscapes of the area now known as the UW Arboretum include Indian mounds, plans to construct a residential area, property boundaries, aerial photographs, as well as other historic photographs. Asking questions about why these images were created, how they were used to shape people's ideas, or how they show landscape change in the Arboretum have proved to be very valuable.

Observation is the final method of evaluation we used. Understanding of how the Arboretum is used on a daily basis by patrons provides insight into what kind of meaning people associate with this place. "Observation is considered to be the ideal and necessary way to verify notions about the world's character, forces, and mechanisms... (Gomez & Jones 2010: 32)". Of course, there are still some issues that we will have to consider in using this method. We will not be able to observe everything that happens in the Arboretum at one time, this will not be an all-inclusive process. Depending on the day and time of the year, there may be different activities and varying numbers of people taking part in these activities.

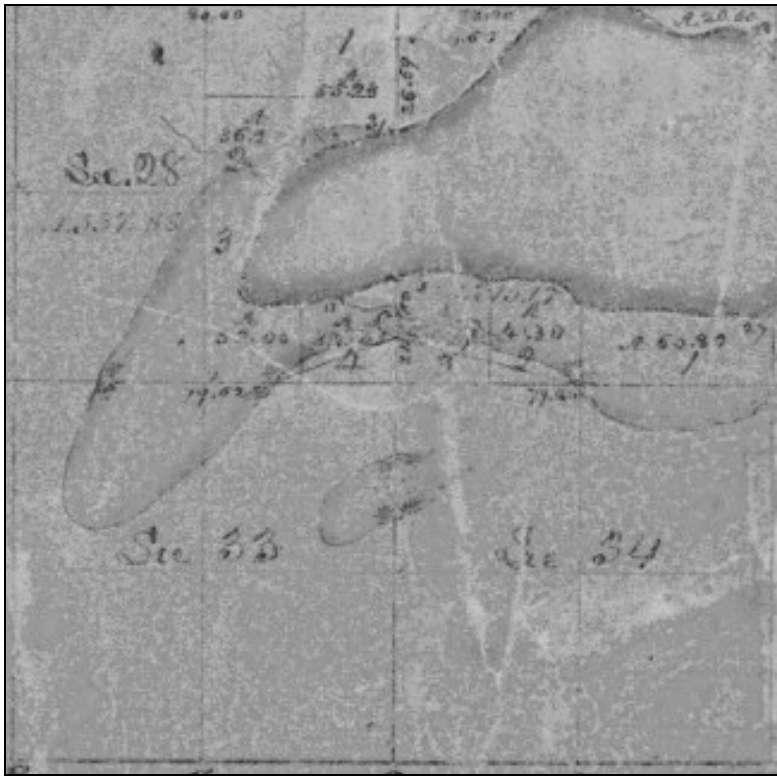
# Appendix



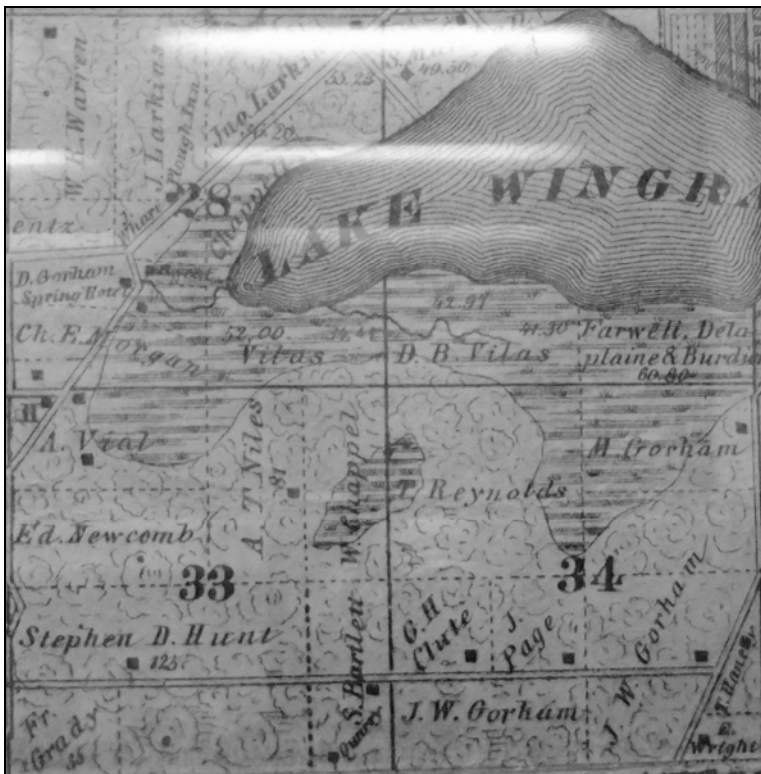
Appendix 1: Overview map of the UW-Arboretum  
UW-Arboretum Archives, Uncataloged

<p>T. 7 N. R. 9 E. 4th Mer. N.W. 34th</p> <p>North between sections 33 &amp; 34</p> <p>9 45 Burr Oak 7 inches diameter</p> <p>15 57 Burr Oak 18 inches diameter</p> <p>40 00 Set quarter section post</p> <p>bearing of Burr Oak 24 S 63 W 53</p> <p>do. 18 N 81 E 90</p> <p>42 46 Burr Oak 16 inches diameter</p> <p>50 00 Entered marsh</p> <p>63 00 Left marsh</p> <p>69 29 Burr Oak 16 inches diameter</p> <p>80 00 Set post cor. to sections 27, 28, 33 &amp; 34</p> <p>Black Oak 16 N 84 E 112</p> <p>Burr Oak 14 N 84 W 50</p> <p>Land rolling &amp; 2nd rate timber Burr &amp; Black Oak</p> <p>Under growth Oak &amp; grass</p>	<p>T. 7 N. R. 9 E. 4th Mer. N.W. 34th</p> <p>East on Random between sections 27 &amp; 34</p> <p>39 00 Entered Marsh</p> <p>79 80 Intersected N. &amp; S. line</p> <p>44 North of post. Land except marsh rolling &amp; 2nd rate timber Burr &amp; Black Oak</p> <p>under growth Oak &amp; grass</p> <hr/> <p>West corrected between sections 27 &amp; 34</p> <p>39 90 Set quarter section post</p> <p>bearing of Burr Oak 16 S 83 W 90</p> <p>do 14 N 81 1/2 W 10.25</p> <p>79 80 Section Corner</p>
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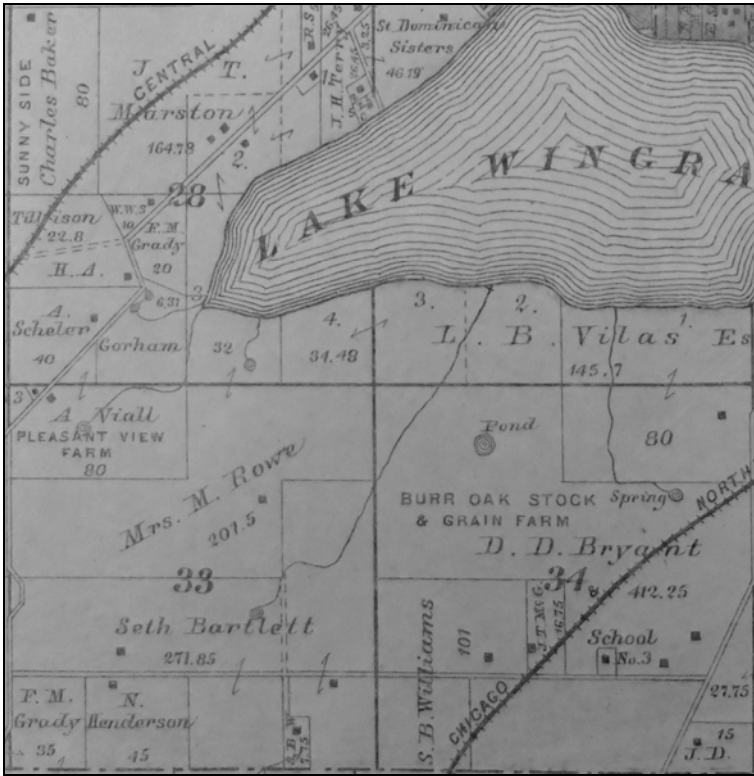
Appendix 2: 1830's Original Surveyor Notes  
 Wisconsin Public Land Survey Records. <http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/SurveyNotes/>



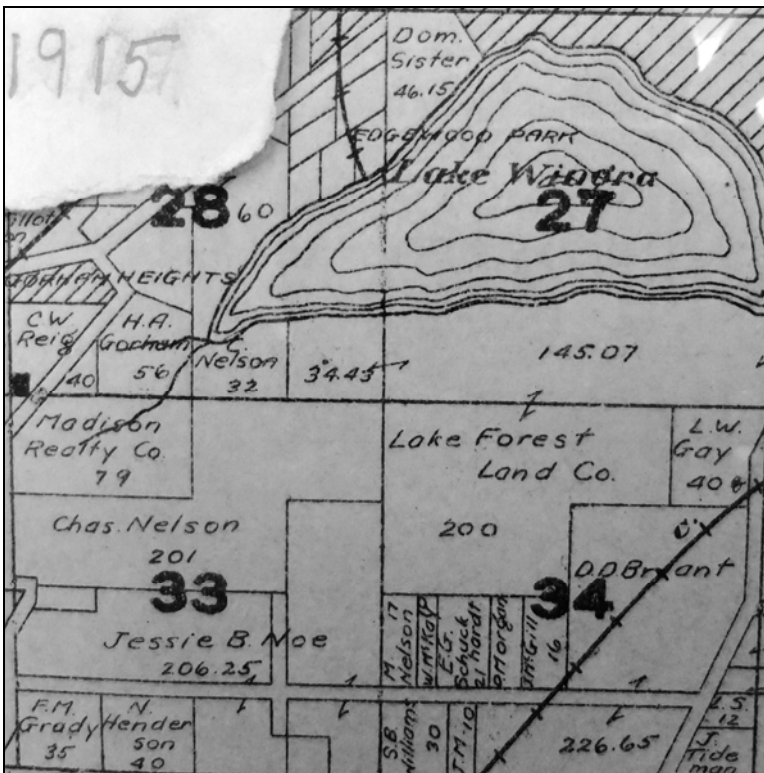
Appendix 3: 1830's Original Land Survey  
 Wisconsin Public Land Survey Records. <http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/SurveyNotes/>



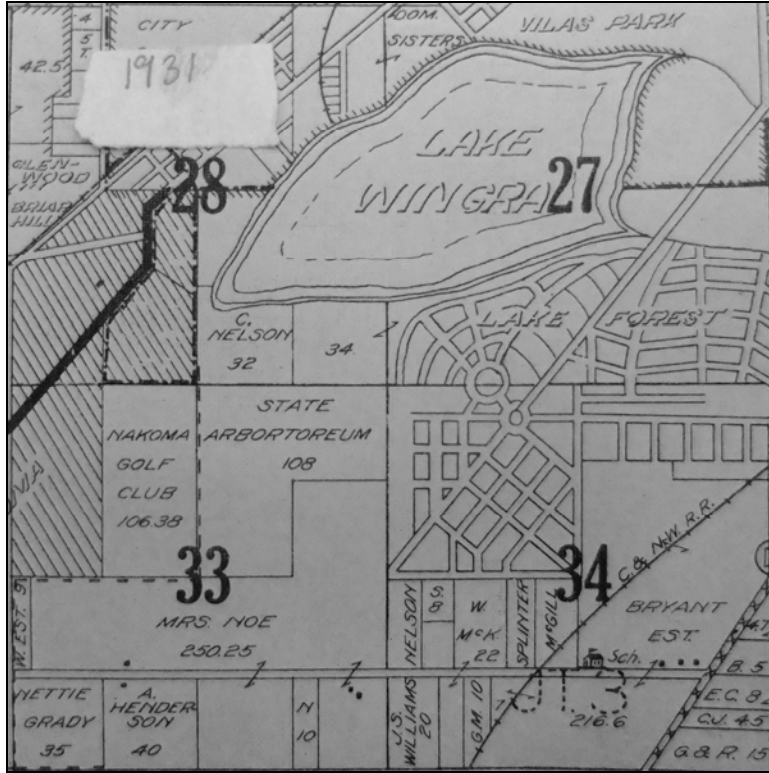
Appendix 4: 1861 Madison Plat Map. Increased divisions of land.  
 Wisconsin State Historical Archives; Call number D GX9028 D17 1861 L



Appendix 5: 1890 Madison Plat Map. Note rail line.  
 Wisconsin State Historical Archives; Call Number: A GZ902 D17 F



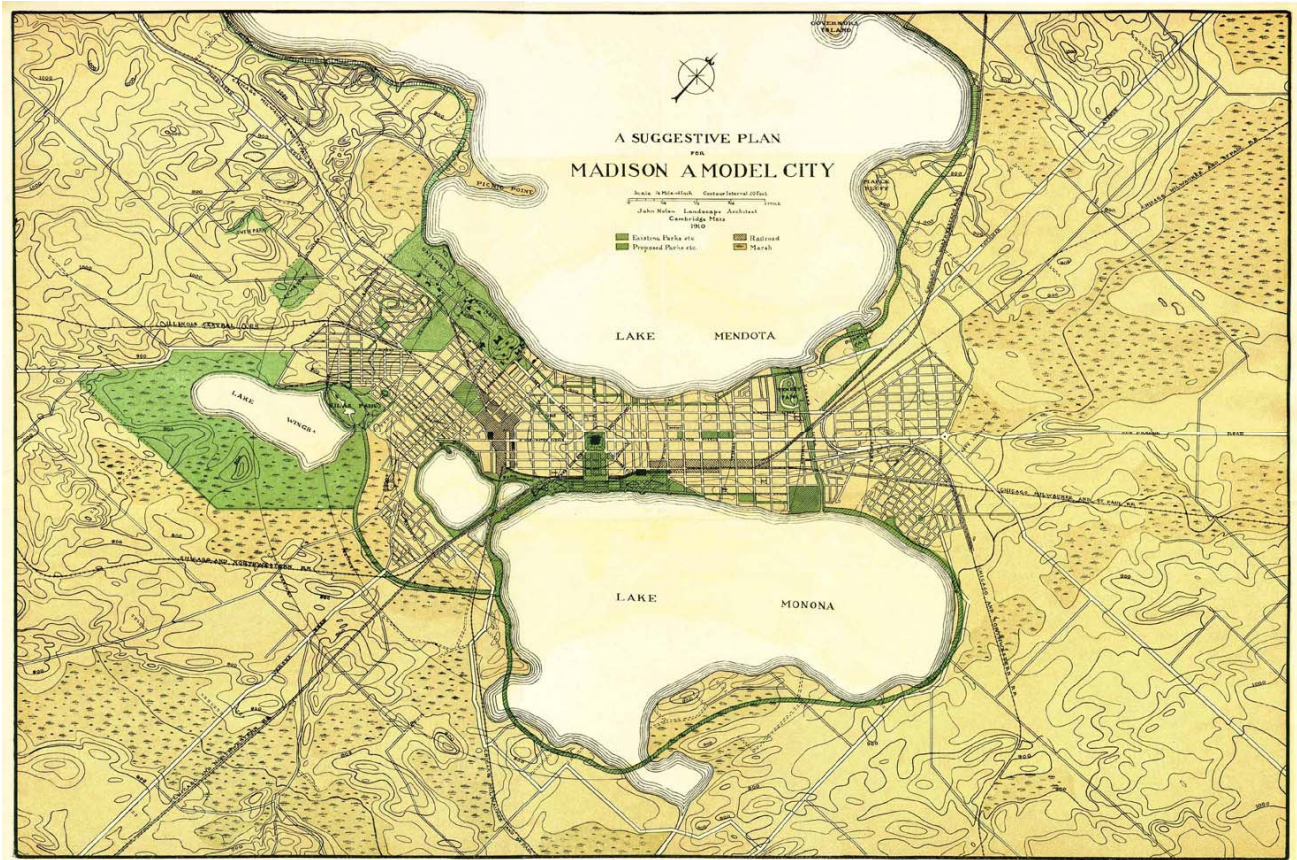
Appendix 6: 1915 Madison Plat Map  
 Wisconsin State Historical Archives; Call Number: R GZ902 1915



Appendix 7: 1931 Madison Plat Map  
 Wisconsin State Historical Archives; Call Number: A GZ902 D17 T



Appendix 8: 1940 Madison Plat Map  
 Wisconsin State Historical Archives; Call Number: B GZ902 D17 H2



Appendix 9: A suggestive plan for Madison, A Model City. Note the designation of an Arboretum around Lake Wingra. Nolen 1911.

## Observational Data

Activity	10/15/10	11/07/10	11/14/10	Total
Biker	21	34	26	81
Hiker/Walker	28	25	27	80
Cars Parked	38	27	24	89
Cars Driving	12	-	-	12
Runner	14	21	12	47
Parked Bike	2	-	-	2
Other/Picnic	3	4	-	7
Tour Attendees	-	30	50	80
Volunteers	-	7	-	7

**Table 2: Observational Data.** On three separate days we went to Arboretum to collect observational data on what kind of activities people performed while in the Arboretum. Data was collected over a 2 hour period each day. A tally was given to the corresponding activity or object each time we observed it. This data is only useful in showing how diverse Arboretum use is. It cannot tell you what kinds of activities are most popular or frequent on any day of the week. Rather it shows that even in a short time period, in only one small portion of the Arboretum, there are many different users of the Arboretum.

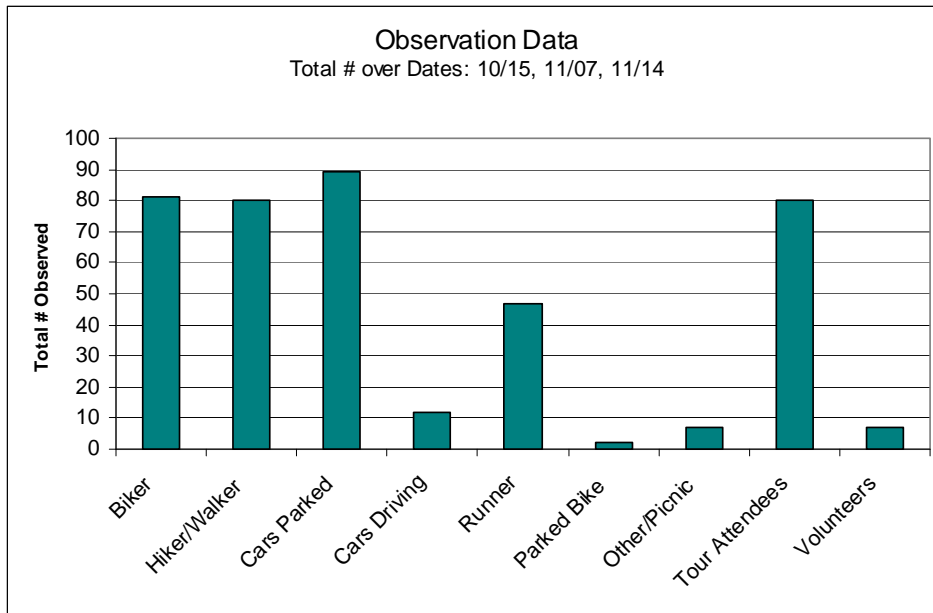


Figure 15: Observational Data Totals. This figure displays the total observations measured for each activity over the three days of data acquisition. This graph is not meant to show which activities are most popular, but rather to show that uses of the Arboretum do so for many different reasons. Depending on what time of year, day of the week, time of day, and what area you are in, these numbers would change dramatically. Omitted from these observations is research. It is possible that some of the people we observed were working on research, but it was difficult to tell. Surely research in the Arboretum has a very strong presence.

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