United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form  

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).  

### 1. Name of Property  

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### 2. Location  

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### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification  

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this _X_ nomination _request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.  
In my opinion, the property _X_ meets _does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:  

- _national_  
- _statewide_  
- _X_local_  

[Signature]  
Deputy SHPO  
Date  

West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office  

In my opinion, the property _meets_ _X_does not meet the National Register criteria.  
Signature of commenting official  
Date  

Title  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government  

### 4. National Park Service Certification  

I hereby certify that this property is:  

- _entered in the National Register_  
- _determined eligible for the National Register_  
- _determined not eligible for the National Register_  
- _removed from the National Register_  
- _other (explain):_  

[Signature]  
Date of Action
### 5. Classification

<table>
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**Name of related multiple property listing**
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

### 6. Function or Use

**Historic Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions.)

- TRANSPORTATION/road-related/fountain
- LANDSCAPE/park/drinking fountain

**Current Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions.)

- LANDSCAPE/park

### 7. Description

**Architectural Classification**
(Enter categories from instructions.)

- OTHER/fountain

**Materials**
(Enter categories from instructions.)

- foundation: STONE
- walls: STONE
- roof: STONE/Quartz
- other: STONE
Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a summary paragraph that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

See continuation sheets.

Narrative Description

See continuation sheets.
8. Statement of Significance

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

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

- SOCIAL HISTORY
- TRANSPORTATION

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Period of Significance

1932-1955

Significant Dates

Significant Person

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Period of Significance (justification)

See continuation sheets.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

See continuation sheets.
Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

See continuation sheets.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

See continuation sheets.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

See continuation sheets.
Pin Oak Fountain  
Name of Property  

Hampshire County, WV  
County and State  

### 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

See continuation sheets.

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #

**Primary location of additional data:**
- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Pin Oak Community Education Outreach Service Club

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Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

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### 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property**  
Less than \( \frac{1}{4} \) acre

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

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**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

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**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

See continuation sheets.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

See continuation sheets.
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form
NPS Form 10-900

Pin Oak Fountain  Hampshire County, WV
Name of Property
County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title     Janie-Rice Brother, Senior Architectural Historian
organization  Kentucky Archaeological Survey
street & number  1020A Export Street
city or town   Lexington state  KY

Telephone

Photographs:
Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

See continuation sheets.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.
Pin Oak Fountain
Name of Property
Hampshire County, WV
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Summary Paragraph

The Pin Oak Fountain, built in 1932, is located on the west side of West Virginia State Route 29 (Paw Paw Road), approximately 3.8 miles north of the junction with Route 127. The fountain is in the unincorporated community of Pin Oak. The fountain is part of a wayside, or roadside park that also serves as entranceway to two residential driveways.

A paved section for vehicle traffic is located on the south side of the fountain, which is itself located on a small grassy section with metal posts and a chain surrounding it. A historic marker, placed in 1988 when the fountain was restored, is located on the north side of the fountain. Mature deciduous trees and evergreen trees are located on the west side of the fountain, along with a flagpole and a small flower bed of perennials. The topography changes sharply on the west side; the ground rises to a hill where the spring is located. A series of pipes originally led from the hillside down to the roadside fountain.

The nominated area consists of the entire legal parcel, with one contributing feature, the fountain.

Description

The fountain (Photo 1), built from native stone and quartz, sits on a 16-foot square of flagstone (Photo 8), while the actual footprint of the fountain (at the base) is four feet square (Photos 2 and 3). The structure of the fountain is comprised of four battered rock piers (Photo 4), which are three feet by three feet at the base. The piers taper as they rise, to culminate in a crenellated top and ledge overhang, which provides shelter for the two drinking fountains and trough. The underside of the top is made of quartz, and quartz details the top of the piers and the crenellated section (Photos 5 and 6).

The fountain has two drinking spigots (set into round stone depressions) for people (Photos 9 and 10), and one spigot that dispenses water into a trough (Photo 11). The side facing the road (east) does not contain a fountain (Photo 7); the drinking fountains are located on the north and south sides, while the trough, in which a bucket or pail could be dipped, or where livestock could drink, is located on the west side. A stone step, about seven inches high, 10 inches deep, and one foot seven inches wide, is located at the base of the spigots on the north and south sides of the fountain.

The trough on the west side measures about two feet six inches by one foot four inches, and is one foot in depth (Photo 11).

The historic marker on the north side of the foundation reads:

Built by State Road Comm. and local artisans in 1932; land given by H.R. Edeburn. Crystal quartz quarried from behind nearby Bloomery iron furnace, and stone from hillside behind the fountain. Spring water, gravity fed from hill above, supplied area residents and travelers. Fountain was popular site for picnics, dances, courting, & auctions. Restored in 1988 and maintained by Pin Oak Extension Homemakers Club.¹

¹ The Pin Oak Homemakers Club is now known as the Pin Oak Community Education Outreach Service Club (Pin Oak CEOS).
Statement of Significance

The Pin Oak Fountain meets National Register Criterion A, for its association with transportation improvements in Hampshire County by the West Virginia State Road Commission. During the 1930s, the State Road Commission was engaged in a program to improve the road infrastructure, which included beautification efforts as well as road paving and bridge construction. Numerous roadside fountains were constructed across the state. Though no statewide inventory exists, the Pin Oak Fountain appears to be the only such fountain remaining in Hampshire County, and perhaps the only one of its type in West Virginia.

Historic Background of Hampshire County

Hampshire County, located in West Virginia’s Eastern Panhandle, was created by the Virginia General Assembly from parts of Frederick and Augusta Counties in 1754. At that time, the county encompassed some 2,800 square miles, which would later be whittled down to form all or parts of five additional counties. At that time, it was the western frontier of Virginia, and the route to the Ohio River Valley.

The county seat of Romney was incorporated in 1762, and it holds the title of West Virginia’s oldest city along with Shepherdstown. The first post office in Hampshire County was established in Romney in 1796. Located in the lower valley of the South Branch of the Potomac River, the town benefitted from being along the route of the Northwestern Turnpike (today’s Route 50). As early as 1786, a state road had been completed from Winchester to Romney, but the Northwestern Turnpike was of great benefit to the town and county.

Chartered by the General Assembly of Virginia in 1827, the Northwestern Turnpike was conceived as a rival transportation route to the National Road. It linked Winchester to Parkersburg, and became one of the most important east-west roads in the state. The Baltimore & Ohio and the Northwestern Virginia railroads ran parallel to the Northwestern Turnpike.3

The Civil War was a fractious time in Hampshire County. Two years into the conflict, West Virginia became the nation’s 35th state. The westernmost section of Hampshire County was largely pro-Union (in 1866 that portion would become Mineral County), but the remainder of the county included many Confederate sympathizers. The divided loyalties of residents, and the all-important railroad, meant that clashes occurred frequently in the county.4 During the Civil War, the town of Romney reportedly changed hands 56 times.5 The county’s population in 1870 was 7,643 residents.

Hampshire County grew slowly after the Civil War, with a population of 10,366 in 1880 and in the 1890 census, some 11,419 residents. Farming was the chief occupation; in 1890, there were 1,365 farms in the county, with an average farm size of 250 acres.6

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4 Olson, “Hampshire County.”
6 Historical Census Browser. Retrieved August 2015, from the University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center: http://mapserver.lib.virginia.edu/.
Numerous crossroad communities and hamlets are scattered across Hampshire County. The community of Pin Oak, from which the fountain takes its name, is located along West Virginia Route 29 between Paw Paw and Forks of Cacapon. It is unincorporated and does not appear to ever have had a post office, but it did have a school and a church; the area is now mostly modern homes and trailers. The Pin Oak Fountain served not only travelers on Route 29, but the local community as a social and civic gathering place.

To the north of Pin Oak is the community of Paw Paw, described in the WPA guide as follows:

…a shipping point for a fruit-growing district also has a tannery established about 1875 because of the abundant local supply of oak bark. Paw Paw was an important concentration for Union troops during the War between the States; as many as 16,000 were encamped here at one time in barracks and a blockhouse along the tracks of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad.7

Hampshire County today covers around 644 square miles, and has a population of around 23,000 people. The economy remains focused on agriculture, logging and wood products, as well as tourism.8

Transportation in West Virginia

The opening lines of the WPA Guide to West Virginia chapter on transportation conveys some of the issues inherent in establishing a reliable transportation system in the state:

Despite the barriers of the Blue Ridge and Allegheny Mountains and the rugged hills of the interior, which confined even mighty buffalo and the tireless Indian to a few difficult trails, the State with the highest mean altitude east of the Rockies boasts spectacular achievements in transportation.9

Buffalo traces and trails utilized by Native Americans, spread across the ridges and valleys of what would become West Virginia, formed the foundation of a 19th-century turnpike system in the state. Although many roads were authorized by the Virginia legislature in the late 18th century, the few roads that were constructed were usually not paved, and suffered from a lack of maintenance. The challenging terrain and inferior construction techniques stymied the development of an overland transportation network. Despite the natural and manmade obstacles, West Virginia had four principal east-west routes by the mid-19th century, including: the National Road (1818), the James River and Kanawha Turnpike (1832), the Northwestern Virginia Turnpike (1838), and the Staunton-Parkersburg Turnpike (1847).

The railroad, however, caused a neglect of the road system. In the 1890s, bicyclists and farmers banded together to demand improved roads. Responsibility for road construction and maintenance at the time fell to the counties where “local officials concentrated on building roads to their own county seat rather than from one county to another.”10 But by 1909, despite there being 1,200 miles of paved highways in the state, only two county seats were actually connected by a road network.

In 1909, the West Virginia legislature established the State Road Fund. At the same time, the positions of state commissioner of public roads, and county road engineers, were created. Two years later, both the fund and the position of state commissioner was abolished. Upheaval continued. In 1913, the State Road Bureau was created, only

8 Olson, “Hampshire County.”
to be replaced by the State Road Commission in 1917. This last incarnation of an effort to oversee the web of roads snaking across the state proved to be the most fruitful. In 1970, the State Road Commission was renamed the Department of Highways, which is today’s West Virginia Division of Highways.

The West Virginia Good Roads Federation, using the slogan “Help Pull West Virginia out of the Mud,” began campaigning in 1919 for an amendment to the state constitution to “empower the legislature to undertake road improvements.” After voters approved two “good roads” amendments in 1920 and 1928, the state government, bolstered by some federal and county funds, focused on the construction of a state road system and the improvement of other primary routes.

*The Great Depression and the Beginning of Roadside Fountain Construction*

Any major gains made on statewide cohesion and the development of a plan to counter the state’s road system during the 1920s was stalled by the Great Depression which impacted the Mountain State with unemployment figures exceeding 80 percent. The early 1930s, then, saw the State Road Commission ready to tackle only small transportation improvement projects such as the construction of roadside drinking fountains.

The Pin Oak Fountain site was chosen for the large spring on the hillside behind the road. The resulting fountain would provide easier access to the community’s water supply while also aiding travelers. Local men from Hampshire County worked on the construction of the Pin Oak Fountain, including Roy Keister of Romney, who acted as head mason. Ottis C. Eaton, Welby Cowgill, and Dave Burton also worked on the fountain, gathering the crystal quartz from “behind the Iron furnace property on Route 127 in Bloomery, West Virginia.” The remainder of the rock was hauled from the mountainside behind the fountain.

The Pin Oak Fountain served as the surrounding community’s main water supply through the mid-20th century when residents began to drill their own wells. It was likely around this time that the state ceased to maintain the property. According to the Pin Oak CEOS, the original agreement regarding the use of the land on which the fountain is located stipulated that should the state of West Virginia fail to maintain the property, it would automatically return to the land owner. Efforts to secure the fountain and restore it began in 1981, culminating with the restoration of the fountain in 1988. In more recent years, the water pipes under the fountain have been replaced so that water could run to the fountain again in the future.

While the Pin Oak Fountain is a singular roadside feature today, it was not a unique project at the time, even if its material and design might be superlative. In using local materials, and putting (likely unemployed) local artisans to work, the State Road Commission was utilizing tactics later used by New Deal programs. The Pin Oak Fountain has been called a “WPA fountain” many times, and although many people associate roadside fountains with the Works Progress Administration (WPA), there has been no connection discovered thus far between the Pin Oak Fountain and the WPA. It was solely a program of the West Virginia State Road Commission.

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13 Marie Bohrer. “History of the Pin Oak Fountain.” 1988. Personal correspondence to author from Jan Ott, President of the Pin OAK CEOS Club.
14 Conversation with Jan Ott, President of the Pin OAK CEOS Club.
The WPA was authorized by the United States Congress in 1935. Frank Wicher McCullough of Huntington was appointed the West Virginia Administrator, and was succeeded by Joseph Newman Alderson in 1937. State politicians fought bitterly over the WPA’s administration and mandates, and West Virginia “was one of the handful of states in which there were serious charges of political interference with the WPA.”\(^{15}\)

The West Virginia New Deal/CCC Trail documents many projects in the state, including state parks, camps, and recreation areas (among others), but no mention is made of waysides or roadside fountains. Drinking fountains were common projects for the WPA and CCC. Almost every WPA Guide produced at the time mentions drinking fountains, and many states have completed inventories of waysides and drinking fountains along their roadways. Of course, roadside watering holes are not inventions of the 20\(^{th}\) century.

Numerous springs dot Hampshire County. Well before the automobile age, travelers took advantage of natural springs near roads. “Between Romney and Springfield, one is sure to notice the spring by the wayside at Grace where it is protected by a cement wall and accompanied by evidence of frequent use by the inhabitants and travelers.”\(^{16}\) A spring near Mechanicsburg was described as flowing “in inviting jets for the traveler, and then to the water-trough for the horses.”\(^{17}\)

The following article appeared in the January 20, 1932 edition of the Hampshire Review:

> The State Road Commission reports the construction of a total of 35 roadside drinking fountains in 20 different counties and on 15 different routes in the state. They have been built mostly of local materials by the commission’s maintenance forces. The fountains are constructed after the available water supply has been examined and approved by the State Health Department. The fountains in Hampshire County are both on Route 50, one in Mechanicsburg Gap and other on the east side of the mountain east of Romney.\(^{18}\)

West Virginia’s effort to erect roadside fountains was not going unnoticed. In a May 4, 1933 article in the Bluefield Daily Telegraph, the efforts of the State Road Commission were praised. The article, entitled “The State Profits,” describes an “important piece of favorable publicity” that had recently appeared in a publication called the Literary Digest. Apparently, half a page in this publication was about the roadside fountains in West Virginia.

> Pure, easily available drinking water is an important item in the comfort of the tourist. That West Virginia provides this for those using its modern highways is a fact that will be hailed by all those who pass this way…This single bit of publicity circulated through the United States will unquestionably favorably dispose man of those who read it to use West Virginia roads when the opportunity presents itself. And if the state ever finds it possible to go further and beautify its roadsides with plantings of native shrubs and trees, with verdant coverings of ugly scars made by cuts and fills, and with elimination of unsightly billboards and other roadside ugliness, the favorable publicity…will be many times multiplied.\(^{19}\)

Other secondary sources, including the WPA Guide, mention several fountains and waysides, including the Sulphur Roadside Park along US 60. The park had camp and picnic facilities, and was maintained by the State Road Commission. Set back in a “small grove of pine, elms, and maple, not far from the road, is a Sulphur Spring and a


\(^{17}\) Ibid.

\(^{18}\) Hampshire Review. Wednesday, January 20, 1932, page 1. Despite combing three years of the Hampshire Review (from 1931 to 1933), no mention of the Pin Oak Fountain was located.

drinking fountain.” 20 A roadside drinking fountain was located at the “south approach of the bridge crossing the Greenbrier River” on US 219 from Lewisburg to Princeton. 21

Another roadside fountain acted not only as a roadside improvement, but as a benefit to a tourist attraction to a display of coal. A photograph and accompanying caption in The Raleigh Register noted that “this coal outcrop, framed in masonry and illuminated at night, faces Routes 19-21 as they emerge from the southern limit of Mt. Hope. A highway drinking fountain, on the other side of the road, offers added inducement to the travelers to stop.” 22

Summary

The Pin Oak Fountain represents an effort by the West Virginia State Road Commission in the 1930s to construct roadside drinking fountains along its roadways. As a rural state, there were not necessarily places to stop along many routes. The drinking fountains provided clean drinking water not only for travelers, but for residents of the nearby crossroad communities and hamlets.

Although there has not been a statewide inventory conducted of remaining roadside drinking fountains in West Virginia, there were at least two other fountains in Hampshire County along Route 50. The Pin Oak Fountain, which maintains a high degree of integrity of feeling, design, association and materials, is a vestige of the early automobile age and the state’s fledgling efforts to improve its transportation infrastructure.

20 West Virginia Writer’s Project, 531.
21 Ibid, 474.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Bohrer, Marie. “History of the Pin Oak Fountain.” 1988. Personal correspondence to author from Jan Ott, President of the Pin OAK CEOS Club.


Personal communication with Jan Ott, President of the Pin OAK CEOS Club.


VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property includes that roped off area on the west side of WV Route 29 (Paw Paw Road) containing the fountain, flagpole, historic marker, landscaping, and parking area. This area is leased to the Hampshire County Commission from the property owner, Peter Chresso. The Hampshire County parcel ID is 01-009-038.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The property proposed for inclusion on the National Register by the current nomination includes the park area associated with the Pin Oak Fountain, which is bounded on the west by Route 29. The proposed boundaries provide an appropriate setting for understanding the significance of the fountain within its historic context in Hampshire County.
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number

Photos  Page  9

PHOTOS

All photos:
The Pin Oak Fountain, HM-0207
Hampshire County, West Virginia
Janie-Rice Brother, Photographer
2015
CD at the West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office

Photo 1. The Pin Oak Fountain, facing west from the east side of Route 29.

Photo 2. The Pin Oak Fountain, south side, facing north.

Photo 3. The Pin Oak Fountain, north side, and its historic marker, facing south.

Photo 4. The Pin Oak Fountain, west side, facing east.

Photo 5. Detail of the top of the Pin Oak Fountain, east side, showing crenellation and quartz detailing.

Photo 6. Detail of the underside of the roof of the Pin Oak Fountain.

Photo 7. Detail of the east side of the Pin Oak Fountain, showing plaque placed by Pin Oak Homemakers.

Photo 8. Detail of the stone flagstone around the Pin Oak Fountain.

Photo 9. Detail of the south side of the Pin Oak Fountain, showing one of the two drinking spigots.

Photo 10. Detail of the round depression associated with the two drinking spigots on the north and south sides of the Pin Oak Fountain.

Photo 11. Detail of the trough on the west side of the Pin Oak Fountain.
Pin Oak Fountain
Hampshire County, West Virginia
Site Plan and Photo Locations
Figure 1: The Pin Oak Fountain, Facing West from the East Side of Route 29.

Figure 2: The Pin Oak Fountain, South Side, Facing North.
Figure 3: The Pin Oak Fountain, North Side and its historic roadside marker, Facing South.

Figure 4: The Pin Oak Fountain, West Side, Facing East
Figure 5: Detail, Top of Pin Oak Fountain, East Side, Showing crenellation and quartz detailing.

Figure 6: Detail, Underside of the Pin Oak Fountain roof.
Photo Log – Pin Oak Fountain, Hampshire County, WV

Figure 7: Detail, East Side, Pin Oak Fountain, Showing plaque placed by the Pin Oak Homemakers.

Figure 8: Detail, Flagstone around the Pin Oak Fountain.
Figure 9: Detail, South Side of the Pin Oak Fountain, Showing one of the two drinking spigots.
Figure 10: Detail, Depression associated with the two drinking spigots on the fountain's north and south sides.

Figure 11: Detail, Trough on the fountain’s west side.