

# Monument Avenue Commission

August 9, 2017

Virginia Historical Society

*Thank you for being here!*

Share the conversation on Social Media

#RVAMonuments

#OnMonumentAve

## Agenda

- Welcome by Jamie Bosket, Director of Virginia Historical Society (2-3 minutes)
- Welcome and purpose of the Commission - Co-Chairs Christy Coleman & Greg Kimball (3-5 minutes)
- Comment period: 100-minutes (50 speakers minimum) of two-minute comments on the charges of the Commission:
  - What does context look like to you?
  - What additional monuments would you like to see added?
- Closing

## Speakers

- Those wishing to speak should sign in at one of the tables in the lobby and you will be assigned a number.
- During the meeting, a commissioner will randomly draw five numbers at a time; those called will line up to speak.
- Each speaker will be given two minutes to comment.
- If your number is called and you choose not to speak you do not have to line up at the microphone.
- Speakers at this meeting will not be allowed to sign up at the September meeting unless there is excess allotment of time.
- Please note that the rules and regulations of the Virginia Historical Society are in effect.

*The Commission appreciates the thoughtful and respectful tone of our conversations. Let's keep it going!*

**Monument: Robert E. Lee****Date Conceived:** 1870 (upon Lee's death)**Date Erected:** May 29, 1890**Location:** Round-a-bout Intersection of Monument Avenue and Allen Avenue**Sculptor:** Jean Antonin Mercie (France), base by Paul Pujol (France)

**Organizers:** The Hollywood (cemetery) Memorial Association organized the Ladies' Lee Monument Association which solicited funds for 16 years from all southern states. Their goal was a memorial statue in Hollywood Cemetery. Confederate General Jubal Early also organized a committee of men to raise funds for a memorial with Jefferson Davis as honorary chair. Former confederates throughout the south began to collect funds. By 1877 neither group had raised enough funds. The General Assembly passed an act creating a governor's board to head the effort—led after 1885 by Fitzhugh Lee, R.E. Lee's nephew—to which the men's group gave their funds. In 1886 a legislative act combining the funds of the Ladies Lee Monument Association with the men's funds for a total of \$52,000.

**Description:** The statue on Monument Avenue is a 61' bronze equestrian statue of General Lee, bare headed and in uniform, astride his horse Traveler in a calm stance reportedly following battle at Gettysburg or after surrender at Appomattox. The base is a marble oval with 4 granite pillars and a bronze plaque embossed with "Lee". The base is unfinished from its original design which included allegorical groups on the south and north. The front would have included a figure of Liberty with a confederate soldier at her feet as she leaned on her spear and placed her laurel wreath on his head. The rear group would have depicted the Angel of Peace taking weapons from the Goddess of War.

The Governor's board argued for many years about a location. Most members were in favor of Libby Hill or Gambles Hill for the long vistas afforded. In 1887 Col. Otway Allen suggested his property at the end of Franklin Street west of the city limits. The Governor preferred this site due to its potential for development and increased taxes from the suggested annexation of adjacent property. Allen's offer was accepted based on a drawing by C.P.E. Burgyn, the city engineer, of a circular grassy lot, 200' in diameter, at the intersection of the end of Franklin Avenue and the city limits. The final 1888 drawing by Burgyn indicated the many housing lots intended for sale and grassy tree-lined median extending north, south, east and west from the statue to create a grand residential district around the statue. The statue was erected in 1890. The street and area around it was called the Lee District until around 1907.

**Monument: General J.E.B. Stuart**

**Date Conceived:** A resolution by city council for a statue was made immediately following Stuart's death during the CW.

**Date Erected:** May 30, 1907

**Location:** Original desired location: Capitol Square. Final: Round-a-bout Intersection of Monument Avenue and Lombardy Street. City Board of Alderman gave \$20,000 to place it "anywhere but Capitol Square." The site was decided upon around 1904.

**Sculptor:** Frederick Moynihan

**Organizers:** In 1891 the Veteran Cavalry Association of the Army of Northern



Virginia was organized. Fitzhugh Lee was a member and created the Stuart Monument Association. A sketch of the monument was provided in 1896 by M. J. Dimmock during a Confederate veterans' reunion.

**Description:** 22' bronze equestrian monument of the young General seems to be halting his horse from full stride. He is turning to face east down what would have been at the time oncoming traffic heading west on W. Franklin St. (street is now one-way heading east to facilitate better rush hour traffic). He is wearing his signature hat and is in full uniform with a sword at his side. The statue base is of Virginia granite and is in the shape of a sloping hill. The base of the statue is inscribed with:

East side: MAJ. GEN J.E.B. STUART / Commander Cavalry Corps / Army Northern Virginia / Confederate States of America / This statue erected by his comrades and the City of Richmond A.D. 1907

West side: Born in Patrick County, Va, February 6, 1833/ Died in Richmond, Va, May 12, 1864 / Aged 31 Years / Mortally wounded in the Battle of Yellow Tavern May 11, 1864 / "He gave his life for his country and saved his city from capture."

South side: "Tell General Stuart to act on his own judgement and do what he thinks best; I have implicit confidence in him." – General T. F. (Stonewall) Jackson on turning over the command of his troops to Stuart, after being wounded at Chancellorsville, May 2, 1863.

North side: His grateful countrymen will mourn his loss and cherish his memory. To his comrades in arms he has left the proud recollection of his deeds and the inspiring influence of his example." General R.E. Lee announcing the death of General Stuart to his Army, May 20, 1864.

### **Monument: Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederacy**

**Date Conceived:** December 21, 1889 (10 days after his death)

**Date Erected:** June 3, 1907

**Location:** Proposed: Monroe Park, then Broad Street. Final: Intersection of Monument Avenue and Cedar Avenue (later renamed Davis Ave.) at the site of the CW Star Fort.

**Sculptor:** Statue: Edward V. Valentine; monument design by architect William C. Noland



**Organizers:** In 1889 The Jefferson Davis Monument Association was created to build a monument and to make plans to have Davis's body reburied in Richmond. City Mayor J. Taylor Ellyson presided over the Association. The monument also was backed by the United Confederate Veterans and the Chamber of Commerce. The group sought \$250,000 from former confederates across the south and their descendants. Varina Davis chose Monroe Park as a location and a competition was announced in 1896. The cornerstone for a temple-form design by Percy Griffen of New York was laid in Monroe Park, but the plan was abandoned due to insufficient funds. Around 1902, the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) took up the cause, raising additional funds to add to the \$42,000 left from the original association. Louis Gudebrod won another competition in 1902 but his design for a triumphal arch at Broad and 12th Street was disliked by Mrs. Davis; when fundraising issues continued, he quit. The next year the UDC went to Edward V. Valentine and William C. Noland, a Richmond sculptor and young architect respectively, and asked them to design a statue within the existing budget. In 1904 the UDC requested a site on Monument Avenue from city council following announcement of the site for Stuart. The council gave the UDC a site four blocks to the west on Cedar Street (now Davis Avenue).

**Description:** The monument's design has a central 60' granite column topped by a female figure cast in bronze; an eight-foot tall bronze statue of Jefferson Davis with his right arm outstretched and his left hand resting on an open book; and a semi-circular exedra with a colonnade of thirteen doric columns. The literature created for the

statue dedication in 1907 reads “Symbolized in the Vindicatrix, which crowns the shaft of the monument . . . the emblem of Southern womanhood fitly stands, the immortal spirit of her land, shining unquenched within her eyes, and her hand uplifted in an eternal appeal to the God of justice and truth.” Below her are the words DEO VINDICI (by God the protector.) Also on the column are inscriptions reading PRO JURE CIVITATUM (for the rights of states) and PRO ARIS ET FOCIS (for heart and home.) The bottom of the column above Davis’s head contains the seal of the Confederacy and the words JEFFERSON DAVIS PRESIDENT OF THE CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA 1861-1865. Davis’s pedestal contains the wording JEFFERSON DAVIS / EXPONENT OF / CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLES / DEFENDER OF / THE RIGHTS OF STATES followed by a latin quote from Horace: CRESCIT OCCULTO VELUT / ARBOR AEVO FAMA meaning “The fame from a remote age grows like a tree.” The colonnade includes thirteen doric columns decorated with the stars and bars of the Confederate military. The columns represent the eleven seceding states and the two which sent delegates to the Confederate Congress but did not secede (Missouri and Kentucky).

**Monument: Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson**

**Date Conceived:** November 29, 1911;

**Date Erected:** Cornerstone laid June 3, 1915.

**Statue Erected:** October 11, 1919

**Location:** Intersection of Monument Avenue and The Boulevard

**Sculptor:** F. William Sievers

**Organizer:** The Jackson Monument Corporation with Rev. James Powers Smith (member of Jackson’s wartime staff) as president. Jackson’s widow Mary Anna supported the fundraising. The UDC contributed to fundraising efforts.



**Description:** 37’ tall equestrian statue of bronze on a base of granite. Strength, stability and self-discipline were characteristics often attributed to Jackson who was born into poverty, orphaned at 6, rose to near the top of class at West Point, and was a model soldier before the Civil War. The sculptor Sievers manages to portray both horse and rider as motionless, calm and focused. Oak leaves adorn the statue base and may be a reference to the characterizing of Jackson as stoic. There is an art deco (Greek styled) frieze lining the top of the base. The inscription on the north side of the base reads, “BORN 1824 / DIED AT CHANCELORSVILLE / 1863. The sides facing Monument (east and west) are inscribed with his nickname given by General Bernard Bee, “STONEWALL JACKSON”

The statue was erected following the end of WW1 and may have represented more of a “young brave soldier” archetype to people who had just witnessed the return of another generation of soldiers. During the unveiling ceremony the Governor and Jackson family were driven to the site in automobiles. Robert E. Lee’s grandson spoke and Jackson’s granddaughter and the sculptor’s son pulled the ropes to unveil the statue. A parade of VMI cadets, Virginia National guardsmen, and school children marched to the site.

**Monument: Matthew Fontaine Maury**

**Date Conceived:** Winter 1912

**Date Erected:** Cornerstone: June 22, 1922, **Statue:** November 11, 1929

**Location:** Intersection of Monument Avenue and Belmont Avenue

**Sculptor:** F. William Sievers



**Organizer:** Richmonder Gaston Lichtenstein noted Maury's name on a monument in Hamburg, Germany, and wrote a letter to a Richmond newspaper suggesting memorialization of the Virginian. Katherine Stiles, a Confederate sympathizer sold pamphlets she had written of her memories. Proceeds helped fund the statue. Lichtenstein got involved again and suggested the statue on Monument. This in turn, inspired Elvira Worth Moffett to create the Maury Monument Association in May 1915. Financial support came from The General Assembly (\$10,000), schoolchildren statewide (\$2,000), The City of Richmond (10,000), The UDC (\$5,000), and a citizen group of donors chaired by Gus Schwartzchild.

**Description:** Maury's statue is more allegorical than the other avenue statues which came before it. A 6' bronze statue of Maury is seated on an 8' granite pedestal. His left hand holds sea charts, his right a compass. Behind him is another pedestal topped by a globe surrounded by swirling, stormy waters and figures bracing in the storm including a figure in a boat at sea, a woman in the storm, and a man a boy with a dog and cow suffering a ravaging storm on land. The North American continent is visible on the top of the globe, but the rest of the globe appears to be swirling waters. The statue stands 30' in total.

In a letter to the RTD Sievers says of his statue, "Maury is listening to the storm and visualizing human suffering, and pondering ways of relief." The unveiling of the Maury statue in 1929 saw parades of 2,500 military men and bands. Governor Harry F. Byrd spoke. Maury's grandchildren pulled the ropes to unveil the statue.

#### **Monument: Arthur Ashe**

**Date Conceived:** In 1992, DiPasquale discussed the concept with Arthur Ashe. Upon Ashe's death on February 6, 1993, the Arthur Ashe Monument Committee was formed.

**Date Erected:** July 10, 1996

**Location:** Intersection of Monument Avenue and Roseneath Avenue

**Sculptor:** Paul DiPasquale

**Organizer:** Paul DiPasquale and Arthur Ashe monument committee



**Description:** The 12' bronze statue stands on a 12' pedestal and is located at the intersection of Monument Avenue and Roseneath Avenue at edge of the historic district. Ashe is dressed in athletic clothes and holds a tennis racket in his left hand which is outstretched. In his right hand, held higher than his left, is a stack of books. At his feet are four children looking up at him each with one hand outstretched. The granite cylindrical base is inscribed on the east side with ARTHUR R. ASHE , JR. / 1943-1993 / World Champion, Author, Humanitarian founder of Virginia Heroes , Incorporated / Native of Richmond, Virginia / This monument was placed at Monument Avenue and Roseneath Road on July 10, 1996 to inspire people and children of all nationalities. The West side (front) has inscribed a quote from Hebrews 12:1 "Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witness, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us."

Beginning in 1993 Richmond had a heated and on-going public argument about the placement and artistic quality of the statue. People across Virginia weighed in with their thoughts of the appropriateness of Ashe sharing Monument Avenue with the Confederate generals. Others welcomed the idea of all people being represented on the city's impressive avenue.

#### **Sources:**

- *Richmond's Monument Avenue* (Driggs, Wilson and Winthrop)

- *Monument Avenue History and Architecture* (Edwards, Howard and Prawl for Historic American Buildings Survey)

- *Monuments to the Confederate Memory, a University of Virginia dissertation by Ann Hunter McClean, 1998.*