National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory

2005

Revised: 4/2025



Val-Kill

Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site

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Introduction

The Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI)

The Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) is a comprehensive inventory of all cultural landscapes in the National Park System. Landscapes that are listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places, or are otherwise managed as cultural resources and in which the National Park Service has, or plans to acquire, legal interest are included in the inventory. The CLI identifies and documents each landscape's location, size, physical development, landscape characteristics, character-defining features, and condition. Cultural landscapes have approved CLIs when concurrence with the findings is obtained from the park superintendent and all required data fields are entered into the Cultural Resources Information System (CRIS-CL) database. In addition, for landscapes not currently listed on the National Register and/or without adequate documentation, concurrence is required from the State Historic Preservation Officer, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, or the Keeper of the National Register.

Scope of the CLI

The information contained within the CLI is compiled from primary and secondary sources and through on-site surveys of the landscape. The level of investigation is dependent upon scoping the need for information. The baseline information collected provides a comprehensive look at the historical development and significance of the landscape. Documentation and analysis of the existing landscape identifies character-defining characteristics and features and allows for an evaluation of the landscape's integrity and an assessment of the landscape's condition. The CLI also includes historic maps, drawings, and images; photographs of existing conditions; and a site plan that indicates major features. The CLI documents the existing condition of park landscape resources and identifies impacts, threats, and measures to stabilize condition. This information can be used to develop strategies for improved stewardship. Unlike a Cultural Landscape Report (CLR), the CLI does not provide management recommendations or treatment guidelines for the cultural landscape, but it may identify stabilization measures.

The Cultural Resources Information System (CRIS)

CRIS is the National Park Service's database of cultural resources on its lands, consisting of archeological sites, historic structures, ethnographic resources, and cultural landscapes. Cultural Resources Inventory System (CRIS) replaces three legacy inventory systems: ASMIS (archeology), CLI (cultural landscapes), and LCS (historic structures); and it reinstates the former ERI (ethnographic resources). This Cultural Landscape Inventory document reflects the information in a corresponding CRIS Cultural Landscape record.

Statutory and Regulatory Foundation

The legislative, regulatory, and policy directives for conducting and maintaining the CLI within CRIS are:

- National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 (16 USC 470h-2(a)(1)) Sec. 110
- Executive Order 13287: Preserve America, 2003. Sec. 3 (a and c)
- Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Federal Agency Historic Preservation Programs
- Pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act, 1998. Std. 2
- Cultural Resource Management Guideline, 1997, Release No. 5, page 22; issued pursuant to Director's Order #28 (DO-28)

The NHPA requires the identification, evaluation, and nomination of historic properties to the National Register of Historic Places and the maintenance and expansion of an inventory of cultural resources. DO-28 requires a cyclic assessment of the current condition of cultural landscapes based on an assessment interval, with a default of six years.

Use

Beyond fulfilling legal and policy requirements, park staff can use the Cultural Landscape Inventory in the following ways:

- To learn about park cultural landscapes (all staff)
- To inform management decisions (park managers)
- To inform project planning and development (park managers, facility managers, project managers, compliance specialists)
- To monitor the condition of the cultural landscape and take measures to protect its significance and integrity (cultural resource managers, facility managers)
- To recognize the stabilization and treatment needs of landscape features and plan work within cultural landscapes to address the needs (facility managers, cultural resource managers)
- To understand the cultural value of natural systems in a cultural landscape (natural resource managers)
- To create programming and educational materials based on site history (interpretation and education specialists)
- To recognize impacts within cultural landscapes and enforce protection measures (visitor and resources protection staff)

General Information

Property Level and CLI Numbers

Inventory Unit Name: Val-Kill

Resource Classification: Cultural Landscape

CLI Identification Number: 650024

Parent Landscape: 650024

Inventory Status: Complete

Park Information

Park Name: Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site

Alpha Code: ELRO

Park Organization Code: 1793

Park District: ELRO

Region: Northeast

Restricted: No

Landscape Description:

Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site, historically named Val-Kill, is a 180.5-acre landscape in Hyde Park, New York that is coterminous with the boundaries of the park. The park is administered as part of the Roosevelt–Vanderbilt National Historic Sites that also include the Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Sites. FDR's retreat, Top Cottage, is east of Val-Kill and to the west across NY 9G are former farm fields and forests of FDR's upland farms, connected to the Home (Springwood) and FDR Library by Roosevelt Farm Lane. Both Top Cottage and the upland farms are CLI inventory units of the Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site. Val-Kill consists of domestic, agricultural, and unmanaged (forested/wetland) landscapes approximately two miles east of the Hudson River on the uplands of the former 1,522-acre Roosevelt family estate.

Val-Kill preserves the country home of Eleanor Roosevelt that originated in the 1920s as an informal retreat for Roosevelt family, housed craft manufacturing known as Val-Kill Industries between 1926 and 1936, was the home of Mrs. Roosevelt's close friends Nancy Cook and Marion Dickerman through 1947, and became the primary residence of the former First Lady after the death of President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1945. Through the 1950s and 1960s, the Val-Kill property was owned by Mrs. Roosevelt's sons, Elliott and John Roosevelt, and by John's wife, Anne. As subdivided from the larger Roosevelt Estate by 1952, Val-Kill included 179 acres on portions of the Bennett and Tompkins farms that FDR purchased for conservation purposes in 1911 and 1925, respectively (the historic core of Val-Kill is within the Bennett Farm).

During this time Val-Kil was developed with two cottages, outbuildings, swimming pool, and gardens, surrounded by agricultural fields and forest. The site was a quiet, unassuming place where Mrs. Roosevelt gathered family and friends, underserved youth, dignitaries, politicians, and chance acquaintances, among others. She lived in the former Val-Kill Industries factory building, and John and Anne Roosevelt lived at Stone Cottage. After Mrs. Roosevelt's death in 1962, John and Anne converted the Val-Kill buildings to apartments and in 1970 sold the 179-acre property to developers who planned a retirement community and nursing home. A grassroots effort at saving Val-Kill led to the formation of Eleanor Roosevelt's Val-Kill (ERVK) that advocated for designation of the property as a national historic site. Through the efforts of ERVK and the National Park Service, Congress established Val-Kill as a national historic site in 1977. To perpetuate Mrs. Roosevelt's humanitarian values, the legislation identified a non-profit partner to

provide education and public programming while the National Park Service would preserve the property and conduct tours. Today, ERVK, renamed the Eleanor Roosevelt Center at Val-Kill, serves this role and focuses on Mrs. Roosevelt's legacy of promoting human rights, principled leadership, and social justice. The Center operates from a modern building on the outskirts of Val-Kill, while the historic buildings and grounds at the core of the site are open for tours and contain exhibits.

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

Val-Kill is documented in the National Register of Historic Places for its national-level significance under Criteria A and B in the areas of Politics/Government and Social History for its association with Eleanor Roosevelt, a woman who made significant contributions to 20th century American society and politics as an activist for humanitarian and social causes. As the development of Val-Kill began with Mrs. Roosevelt and continued to play a defining role throughout her later life, the period of significance includes the entire thirty-eight year period she was associated with the site, 1924–1962.

ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION SUMMARY AND CONDITION

The Val-Kill landscape retains much of its historic character as developed through the end of Mrs. Roosevelt's life in 1962, including its natural systems, spatial organization, circulation, buildings and structures, views and vistas, constructed water features, and vegetation. Early park rehabilitation focused on the five historic buildings and the cutting garden that was intended as a memorial to Eleanor Roosevelt. Recent rehabilitation projects have reintroduced historic annual plantings that had been lost around the pool and in the walled garden, reconstructed the loggia in the walled garden, and renewed the swimming pool and tennis courts to evoke their historic uses. Forest plantations in the eastern half of the property that date to FDR's forestry program have naturalized, except for a plantation of white pine that Mrs. Roosevelt called her Secret Woods. While the landscape is not used as the social center it was during the historic period, public educational use and the programming of the Eleanor Roosevelt Center at Val-Kill continues the values Mrs. Roosevelt championed. The surrounding context of the site, historically part of FDR's upland farms that he purchased between 1911 and 1937, includes suburban subdivisions and a power line that were developed in the 1950s during Mrs. Roosevelt's lifetime. One of these subdivisions cut off the estate road that connected Val-Kill with FDR's retreat, Top Cottage. The park maintains a trail to Top Cottage that goes around this subdivision.

Condition:
The condition of the Val-Kill landscape is "fair." It shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, notably sedimentation and loss of open water on the ponds, conversion of historic fields to woods, loss or alteration of plant material, and degradation of earthen roads. Some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to the landscape's cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration will cause the property to degrade to a poor condition.

Landscape Hierarchy Description:

Val-Kill, the name of Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site landscape, represents the inventory unit in the Cultural Resources Inventory System (CRIS-CL) database.

Landscape Type:

Historic Designed Landscape

Historic Vernacular Landscape

Other Names:

Other Name:	Bennett Farm	**Other Name Type:**	Historic
Other Name:	Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site	**Other Name Type:**	Current
Other Name:	Val-Kill	**Other Name Type:**	Both Current And Historic
Other Name:	Tompkins Farm	**Other Name Type:**	Historic

Site Plan



Site map, Drawing 1, 2025.



Site map, Drawing 2, 2025.

Concurrence Information

Concurrence Status:

Park Superintendent Concurrence: Yes

Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence: 06/27/2005

Completion Status Explanatory Narrative:

The original CLI for Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site was approved by the Superintendent on 06/27/2005. A Condition Reassessment for the site was approved by the superintendent on 08/02/2011, indicating the landscape was in fair condition.

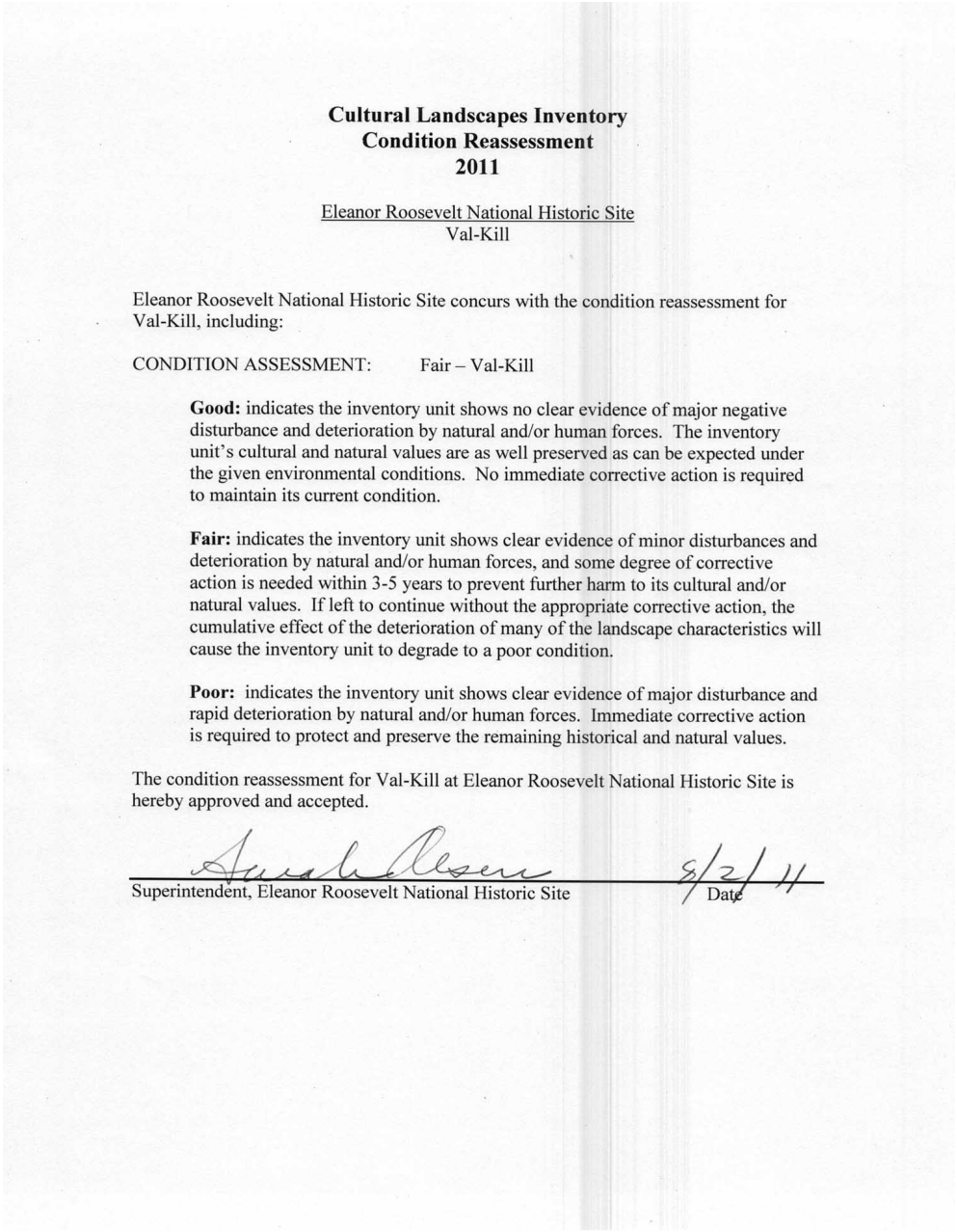
The information contained in this CLI is based primarily on “Cultural Landscape Report for Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site,” Part I (Nowak, 2005) and Part II (Auwaerter and Roberts, 2013); and “FDR and the Land, Roosevelt Estate Historic Resource Study, Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt, National Historic Site” (Sears and Auwaerter, 2011). Justin Kwiatkowski, Connor Neville, and Vera Angelina, research aides at SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF), undertook field work and mapping to update existing conditions in summer 2019. John Auwaerter, NPS Partner at SUNY ESF, updated existing conditions and revised the CLI report in 2023. Additional information was provided by David Hayes, ROVA Integrated Resources Manager (retired).

SUMMARY OF CLI REVISIONS, 2025

The major updates include the following: An expanded physical history and chronology that draws on the findings of the Historic Resource Study for the Roosevelt Estate (2011) and the CLR Part II (2013); a new ArcPro site map and updated GIS data; and a revised analysis and evaluation section with revised classification of landscape characteristics and an expanded inventory of landscape features. Three feature evaluations have been changed to non-contributing since completion of the 2011 condition reassessment: Rose Garden (Fenced Garden) Beds [92946] and North Field Successional Woods [92950] (previously Contributing), and Central Hudson Power Transmission Line [92921] (previously Undetermined).

Concurrence Graphic Information:

Attachment File Path



Cultural Landscapes Inventory
Condition Reassessment
2011

Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site
Val-Kill

Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site concurs with the condition reassessment for Val-Kill, including:

CONDITION ASSESSMENT: Fair – Val-Kill

Good: indicates the inventory unit shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The inventory unit's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Fair: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the landscape characteristics will cause the inventory unit to degrade to a poor condition.

Poor: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values.

The condition reassessment for Val-Kill at Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site is hereby approved and accepted.

Superintendent, Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site — Date 8/2/11

Condition reassessment form, August 2, 2011.

Cultural Landscapes Inventory
Level II

Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site:
Val-Kill Cultural Landscapes Inventory

Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site concurs with the findings of the Level II inventory including the following specific components:

MANAGEMENT CATEGORY: Must Be Preserved and Maintained

CONDITION ASSESSMENT: Fair

Good: indicates the inventory unit shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The inventory unit's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Fair: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the character defining elements, will cause the inventory unit to degrade to a poor condition.

Poor: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values.

The Level II Cultural Landscapes Inventory for Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site is hereby approved and accepted.

Sarah Olsen 6/27/05

Superintendent, Roosevelt/Vanderbilt National Historic Sites / Date

Park concurrence form, June 27, 2005.

OFFICE OF PARKS · RECREATION · HISTORIC PRESERVATION
NEW YORK STATE
Bernadette Castro
Commissioner

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau
Peebles Island, PO Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189 518-237-8643

MEMORANDUM

August 29, 2005

To: Mark Peckham

From: Christine Capella Peters

Subject: NPS-CLI
Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site
Val-Kill Cultural Landscape Inventory
Hyde Park, Dutchess County
05PR04354

Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and its implementing regulations, the National Park Service (NPS) is seeking our concurrence with its findings regarding the significance and integrity of features at Val-Kill, the Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site. The evaluation was prepared as part of the nationwide NPS effort to catalog cultural landscapes within its system through its Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI).

Based on the review of the submitted material, a number of cultural landscape characteristics and associated features are historically important, have integrity and contribute to the overall historic significance of Val-Kill. Although there is some discrepancy between our records (SHPINX) and information contained in the CLI as to which characteristics and features already are acknowledge in the National Register nomination as contributing, the following should be considered as such:

- Circulation—Roadways (including the connector, eastern access, loop and Val-Kill entry roads, driveways between cottages and the driveway circle at Stone Cottage, roads to Top Cottage and the lower dam, and the two-track service drive north of Val-Kill Cottage), trails and walkways.
- Buildings and structures—Bridge and dam, dollhouse, east garden shed, playhouse, stable-garage, Stone Cottage, Val-Kill Cottage (Factory) and west garden shed.
- Vegetation—agricultural fields, cutting garden, Fall-Kill wetland vegetation, forestry plantations, Stone Cottage ivy, Norway spruce row (north of Val-Kill Cottage), oak grove, orchard, red pine tree line (east of bridge), rose garden, southwest pond bank, Stone Cottage entry and walled gardens, successional forests, sycamores between cottages and on pool terrace, and Val-Kill Cottage west lawn.
- Small scale features—apple orchard gate posts, flagpole, low retaining wall, pool pump, stone barbecue, Stone Cottage patio, stone walls, swimming pool and pool shed, swing and teeter-totter, tennis court, and wire fencing.

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August 29, 2005

NPS-CLI
Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site
Val-Kill Cultural Landscape Inventory
Hyde Park, Dutchess County
05PR04354

P.2

The CLI also identifies two unevaluated features, the Central Hudson power lines and the south dam, and several non-contributing features, including:

- Circulation—Stone path to visitor contact station (Val-Kill Cottage).
- Buildings and structures—Caretaker's house.
- Small scale features— NPS benches, lighting and signage, and pump (behind cutting garden).

I concur with the CLI recommendation that the cultural landscape features noted above as contributing to Val-Kill be identified as such within the National Register nomination for the property.

If you have any questions regarding this matter please contact me at 315-492-1756 or christine.capella-peters@oprhp.state.ny.us.

OFFICE OF PARKS · RECREATION · HISTORIC PRESERVATION
NEW YORK STATE
Bernadette Castro
Commissioner

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau
Peebles Island, PO Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189 518-237-8643

September 28, 2005

Laurie Matthews
Cultural Landscape Inventory Coordinator
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
99 Warren St.
Brookline, MA 02445

Re: Cultural Landscape Inventories

FDR Site, Hyde Park, NY
(05PR04358)
Eleanor Roosevelt Site, Hyde Park, NY
(05PR04354)
Fire Island Seashore, Patchogue, NY
(05PR04401)
Statue Of Liberty, New York, NY
(05PR04429)

Dear Ms. Matthews:

The New York State Historic Preservation Office has reviewed recently prepared Cultural Landscape Inventory reports for four park sites in New York State. These reports have been reviewed by Christine Capella-Peters of our Technical Services Unit and in the case of the Statue of Liberty, by Kathy Howe of our National Register Unit. These individuals have provided detailed comments on the evaluations appearing in each of these reports. I encourage you to contact our staff directly if you have questions concerning the content of their reviews. Christine Capella-Peters may be reached at 315-492-1756. Kathy Howe is available at 518-237-8643 ext. 3266.

The review of the Statue of Liberty CLI has been especially challenging given that our office is in the midst of advising the Northeast Region's History Office of the National Park Service of how best to structure a new National Register nomination for the site. This involves recommendations concerning period of significance, and the counting and classification of resources as contributing or non-contributing. Please refer to Kathy Howe's letter of September 01, 2005 (enclosed) for our current recommendations on how landscape elements should be treated in the context of the new and expanded nomination. While we recognize that the CLI has a different purpose than the nomination and by nature must be more specific, it is our hope that the two documents will be generally compatible when completed. We recommend that the National Register period of significance extend from 1883 to 1956 and that this form the context against which significance and integrity are measured.

Thank you for providing us with this opportunity to comment on these reports. We appreciate your efforts on behalf of preserving the significant features of the important National Parks.

Sincerely,

Ruth L. Pierpont
Director
Historic Preservation
Field Services Bureau

Enclosures

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SHPO concurrence letter, September 28, 2005 (9 pages).

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Northeast Region
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106-2878

IN REPLY REFER TO:
H30 (NER-RS&S)

AUG 2 2 2005

Bernadette Castro, Commissioner
New York State Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation
Peebles Island
P.O. Box 189
Waterford, New York 12188-0189

Dear Ms. Castro:

Enclosed you will find a copy of the Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI) for the Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site. The report has been prepared by Lisa Nowak, Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, based on her recent research for the Cultural Landscape Report for that property. The CLI program and the enclosed report continue the National Park Service (NPS) efforts to update our cultural resource inventories.

Through the CLI program, the NPS is currently in the midst of a nationwide effort to inventory its cultural landscapes. The CLI is conducted in accordance with Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. It is an inventory of baseline information for all historically significant cultural landscapes within the national park system, and it examines multiple landscape features that contribute to the significance of historic properties. The CLI process includes gathering information from existing secondary sources and conducting on-site reconnaissance of the existing landscape. The information collected provides a comprehensive look at the historical development and significance of the landscape, placing it in context of the property's overall significance. For landscapes found potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, the evaluation describes their character-defining features and assesses the landscape's overall historical integrity. It also raises questions about the landscape that need further study.

- It is important to note that the CLI reports are not intended as comprehensive inventory reports for any one property, although for some properties they provide fuller documentation than for others. For example, the reports do not include a full architectural description of structures, but document structures as elements of the overall landscape, and similarly documents other characteristics such as vegetation, spatial organization, and views and vistas. The CLI is one component

COPY

of the NPS inventory effort that also includes cultural resource inventories for historic structures, archeological sites, ethnographic resources, and museum objects. For example, the NPS List of Classified Structures inventory includes structural features of cultural landscapes, but the CLI takes a more encompassing approach to the properties, inventorying all above-ground features in each park in which the NPS has a legal or mandated interest.

Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on May 26, 1977, upon its designation as a national park. Documentation was accepted on March 20, 1980. The district is significant in the area of Politics/ Government under Criterion B and in the area of Social History under Criterion A, for its association with Eleanor Roosevelt, a woman who made significant contributions to 20th century American society and politics as an activist for humanitarian and social causes. The period of significance is 1924-1962, representing the entire period that Eleanor Roosevelt was associated with the site. Though some landscape features are mentioned in the documentation, the form focuses heavily on the site's architectural features and Mrs. Roosevelt's life after FDR's death in 1945.

In addition to the National Register documentation, the NPS List of Classified Structures completed an evaluation of buildings and structures located within the park that contribute to its significance. Your office concurred with our determinations on September 24, 1996.

This CLI, based on research completed for the Cultural Landscape Report, fully evaluates the cultural landscape, particularly its associated landscape characteristics and features. The CLI finds that in addition to those buildings, structures, and objects that are listed on the National Register or have been deemed contributing through the List of Classified Structures, the overall landscape retains integrity to the period of significance. Therefore, those landscape characteristics and features that date to the period of significance should be preserved since they contribute to the property's historic character.

We call your particular attention to the Landscape Description, National Register Information, Statement of Significance, and the Analysis and Evaluation Summary in the enclosed CLI.

Based on the CLI, we seek your concurrence on our findings including:

- The cultural landscape retains integrity to the period of significance (1924-1962).
- The landscape characteristics and features that contribute or do not contribute to the significance of the property are those identified on the enclosed list.

NPS Cultural Landscapes Inventory
List of Contributing and Non-Contributing Landscape Characteristics and Associated Features
Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site
June 2005

Contributing Landscape Characteristics & Associated Features
The following landscape characteristics and associated features contribute to the site's historic character, though not all are considered countable resources according to the National Register of Historic Places.

Those marked with an * have been documented on the National Register. Those marked with a + have been identified as contributing through the NPS LCS program. In some cases, the LCS uses a different name which is noted in parentheses.

Circulation

- Connector Road (Roadway) +
- Driveways between the cottages (Roadway) +
- Eastern Access Road (Roadway) +
- Loop Road (Roadway) +
- Old Road to Lower Dam (Roadway) +
- Road to Top Cottage (Roadway) +
- Stone Cottage driveway circle (Roadway) +
- Trails +
- Two-track service drive north of Val-Kill Cottage (Roadway) +
- Val-Kill entry road (Roadway) +
- Walkways +

Buildings and Structures

- Bridge and Dam +
- Dollhouse *
- East Garden Shed * (see note below)
- Playhouse *
- Stable-Garage *
- Stone Cottage *
- Val-Kill Cottage (Factory) * (see note below)
- West Garden Shed * (see note below)

Vegetation

- Agricultural Fields
- Cutting Garden
- Fall-Kill Wetland Vegetation
- Forestry Plantations
- Ivy on Stone Cottage
- Norway Spruce Row North of Factory

Small Scale Features
Central Hudson Power Lines
South Dam

Note: Recent research for both the Historic Structures Report and Cultural Landscape Report have deemed that four names of buildings or structures, as identified in the National Register documentation, are less than accurate. Therefore, we are proposing that they be changed at such time as the documentation is updated or amended.

National Register	*Current Name*
Eleanor's House	Val-Kill Cottage (The Factory)
Potting Shed	West Garden Shed
Tool Shed	East Garden Shed
Stone Gateposts at the Entrance to the Orchard	Apple Orchard Gate Posts

If you concur with our evaluation of the Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site landscape resources, we ask that you please sign on the space provided and return this letter to Laurie Matthews, CLI Coordinator (Address: Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, 99 Warren Street, Brookline, MA 02445) within thirty days. Thank you for your attention to these reports. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Ms. Matthews at 617-566-1689 ext. 266.

Sincerely,

Mary A. Bomar
Regional Director
Northeast Region

Enclosure

cc:
Superintendent, Roosevelt/Vanderbilt National Historic Sites

I concur with the above-stated evaluation, including contributing and non-contributing landscape resources of Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site.

_____ _____
New York State Historic Preservation Officer Date

Oak Grove
Orchard
Red Pine Tree Line East of Bridge
Rose Garden
Southwest Bank of Pond
Stone Cottage Entry Garden
Stone Cottage Walled Garden
Successional Forests
Sycamore Between the Cottages
Sycamore on Pool Terrace
West Lawn of Factory

Views and Vistas
Fall-Kill stream, wetland, and pond

Small Scale Features
Apple Orchard Gate Posts * (see note below)
Flagpole +
Low Retaining Wall +
Pool Pump
Stone Barbecue *
Stone Cottage Patio +
Stone Walls +
Swimming Pool and Pool Shed *
Swing and Teeter Totter +
Tennis Court *
Wire Fencing

Non-Contributing Landscape Characteristics & Associated Features

Buildings and Structures
Caretaker's House

Circulation
Stone Path to Visitor Contact Station in Factory

Small Scale Features
NPS Benches
NPS Lighting
NPS Signage
Pump Behind Cutting Garden

Undetermined Landscape Characteristics & Associated Features

Cultural Landscapes Inventory
CLI Update Certification Form
2025

Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site
Val-Kill

Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site concurs with the update for the Val-Kill CLI, including:

CONDITION ASSESSMENT: Fair – Val-Kill

Good: indicates the inventory unit shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The inventory unit's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Fair: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the character defining elements, will cause the inventory unit to degrade to a poor condition.

Poor: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values

The CLI Update for Val-Kill at Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site is hereby approved and accepted.

AMY BRACEWELL Digitally signed by AMY BRACEWELL
Date: 2025.04.17 13:31:13 -04'00'

Superintendent, Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site Date

Park concurrence form, April 17, 2025.

Revision:

Revised By	Type of Revision	Revision Date	Revision Narrative
Jeff Killion	Change in Condition	08/02/2011	Condition reassessment completed as scheduled.
Jeff Killion	CLI Update	04/17/2025	Three levels of effort have been developed for CLI Updates: A, B, and C. Level C is limited to a condition reassessment of the landscape; Level B includes C and is a targeted update of select data fields; Level A includes C and is a comprehensive update of all data fields. This 2025 update to the Val-Kill CLI has been conducted at a Level A effort.

Geographic Information

State and County:

State	County
New York	Dutchess

Size (Acres): 180.5

Land Tract Number(s)

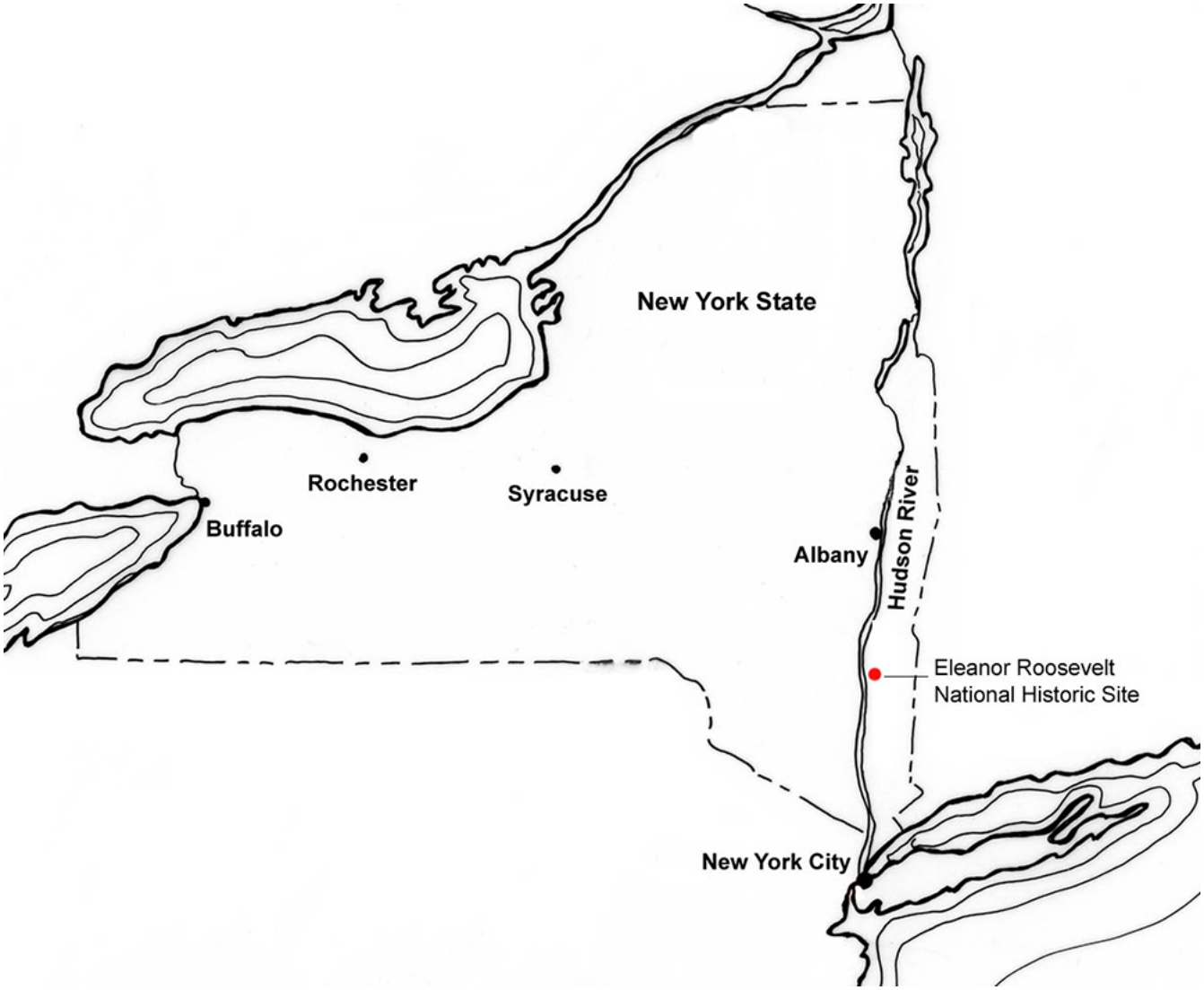
101-01, 179.77 acres
101-02, 0.73 acre (Harbourd Hills Lot #1)

Boundary Description:

The Val-Kill CLI project area is coterminous with the boundary of Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site. The CLI addresses landscape character areas within the park that include the historic core containing the domestic grounds, the forested uplands on the foot of Dutchess Hill (location of Top Cottage), the ponds and wetlands along the Fall Kill, and the meadows, hayfield, and woods on the level terrace that extends east to NY 9G.

The property consists of the main 179.77-acre tract conveyed to the USA in 1978, and a 0.73 acre tract acquired by the federal government in 1979 that consists of undeveloped Lot #1 in the ca. 1953 Harbourd Hills subdivision. This lot, acquired by John Roosevelt in ca.1953, provides access to Roosevelt Road from the rear entrance to Val-Kill (Cross Road). The national historic site is an irregularly-shaped property bounded by NY 9G on the west, the Harbourd Hills subdivision to the north and northeast, HOFR tracts 02-101 and 02-102 on the north and east, undeveloped forested private property on the southeast, and the Lyons residential subdivision on the south and east. The Fall Kill creek runs north-south through the property.

Location Map:



Location of Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site (NHS) in the Hudson Valley region of New York State. Not to scale. (NPS Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation)

Regional Landscape Contexts:

Type of Context: Physiographic

Description:

Val-Kill is on the eastern side of the Hudson Valley and straddles the Low Taconic physiographic region to the east, and the Hudson Lowlands physiographic region to the west. The Low Taconic region, which includes the forested area of the site at the foot of Dutchess Hill where Top Cottage is located, is formed by the foothills to the Taconic Mountains to the east. The Hudson Lowlands region consists of broad terraces and rough areas of rocky outcrop that step up from the Hudson River. The historic core, Fall Kill, and agricultural land that extends west to NY 9G are on an upper terrace.

Type of Context: Cultural

Description:

Val-Kill is within the traditional homeland of the Wappinger people and their ancestors, who lived on the land for generations prior to European colonization that began in the Hudson Valley in the 17th century. The Wappingers shaped the land through agriculture and development of villages, seasonal camps, and trails, and through controlled burning, horticultural, and other traditional resource management practices. European settlers arrived in the 18th century and cleared the forests for farms, establishing a rural landscape that persisted into the twentieth century. The existing landscape of Val-Kill is a legacy of the conversion of these farms to country places by wealthy families beginning in the 19th century, notably the Roosevelt country place estate, Springwood, which bordered the Hudson River. The Val-Kill landscape also reflects the decline of market agriculture on the smaller upland farms during the early 20th century, a trend that led Franklin D. Roosevelt to acquire the farms that included the Val-Kill site in 1911 and 1925 and use the farms to demonstrate forestry as a viable new crop for farmers. The establishment of Val-Kill Industries reflected a similar impulse to sustain the rural economy. The larger setting of Val-Kill reflects post-World War II suburbanization, which led to sprawling residential subdivisions marketed to people moving out of the City of Poughkeepsie or who came to the region to work in new industrial facilities, notably IBM. The continued pressure for suburban development through the mid-20th century threatened the survival of Val-Kill until a grass-roots effort succeeded in its designation as a national historic site in 1977.

Type of Context: Political

Description:

Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site consists of federally owned land in the Town of Hyde Park, Dutchess County, New York. The site is bordered by suburban residential subdivisions, federal land that is part of the Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site, and NY 9G, a state highway also known as Violet Avenue that extends from the City of Poughkeepsie north toward the Village of Rhinebeck and terminates at NY 23B near the Rip Van Winkle Bridge. Scattered commercial development is along NY 9G north and south of Val-Kill. The Town of Hyde Park has a population of 21,021 as of April 1, 2020. (U.S. Census Quick Facts)

The Town of Hyde Park is governed by an elected Town Board composed of four members that each represent a district or ward, and a Town Supervisor. The town Planning Board reviews new developments for consistency with applicable laws and the town's Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2005. The Town of Hyde Park does not have an historic district ordinance. It does have a Conservation Advisory Council that advises the Town Board and Planning Board on matters pertaining to the protection of natural resources.

Zoning in the Town of Hyde Park does not identify National Park Service property as a distinct zone. None of the park land is identified as Historic Overlay District or Scenic Overlay District. The Val-Kill site, except for the lot at the rear entrance off Roosevelt Road, is zoned as Greenbelt (GB), which allows for agriculture, camps, bed-and-breakfast, civic facilities, forestry, municipal, nursery school, photovoltaic systems, and roadside stands. Other uses allowed under special permit include charitable institution, community or cultural facility, educational institution, hospital, kennel, membership club, mining, plant nursery, religious use, scrap yard, and rural event venue. Two large, privately owned parcels of mostly forested land south and east of Val-Kill off Dutchess Hill Road (CR 40) are also zoned Greenbelt. The residential subdivisions north and east of Val-Kill (Harbourd Hills), including the park's rear entrance parcel, are zoned Neighborhood, while the subdivision to the south (Lyons) is zoned Greenbelt. The intersection of Creek Road and NY 9G, historically the location of the Val-Kill Weaving Cottage (later Val-Kill Tea Room), is zoned Neighborhood Business District. (Town of Hyde Park website, zoning map, 2021, https://www.hydeparkny.us/502/Town-Code-Local-Laws-and-Maps).

Management Information

General Management Information

Management Category: Must be Preserved and Maintained

Management Category Date: 06/27/2005

Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

As approved on June 27, 2005, the Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site landscape meets the Must Be Preserved and Maintained management category because the preservation of the property is specifically legislated. Congress established Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site “to commemorate for the education, inspiration, and benefit of present and future generations the life and work of an outstanding woman in American history, Eleanor Roosevelt, to provide, in a manner compatible with preservation, interpretation, and use thereof by and for the general public,” and “assuring that no changes or alterations are made to the site inconsistent with its historic significance…” (Public Law 95-32, 95th Congress)

Management Agreements:

Type of Agreement: Other

Management Agreement Expiration Date:

Management Agreement Explanatory Narrative:

Allows for the Eleanor Roosevelt Center at Val-Kill (ERVK) to use its building on park property. Agreement supersedes earlier partnership agreement. ERVK is not considered a park partner (more than a partner, per park legislation).

Type of Agreement: Special Use Permit

Management Agreement Expiration Date:

Management Agreement Explanatory Narrative:

Permit for a farmer to cut hay on the park's south field.

Legal Interests:

Type of Interest: Fee Simple

Narrative: The federal government owns the 180.5 acres of Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site (tracts 101-01, 101-02) in fee simple. Note: a Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation line built in ca.1955 extends across tract 101-01. A ROW agreement dates to 1955 (there is also a 1982 as-built drawing).

Located in managed wilderness?: No

Adjacent Lands Information

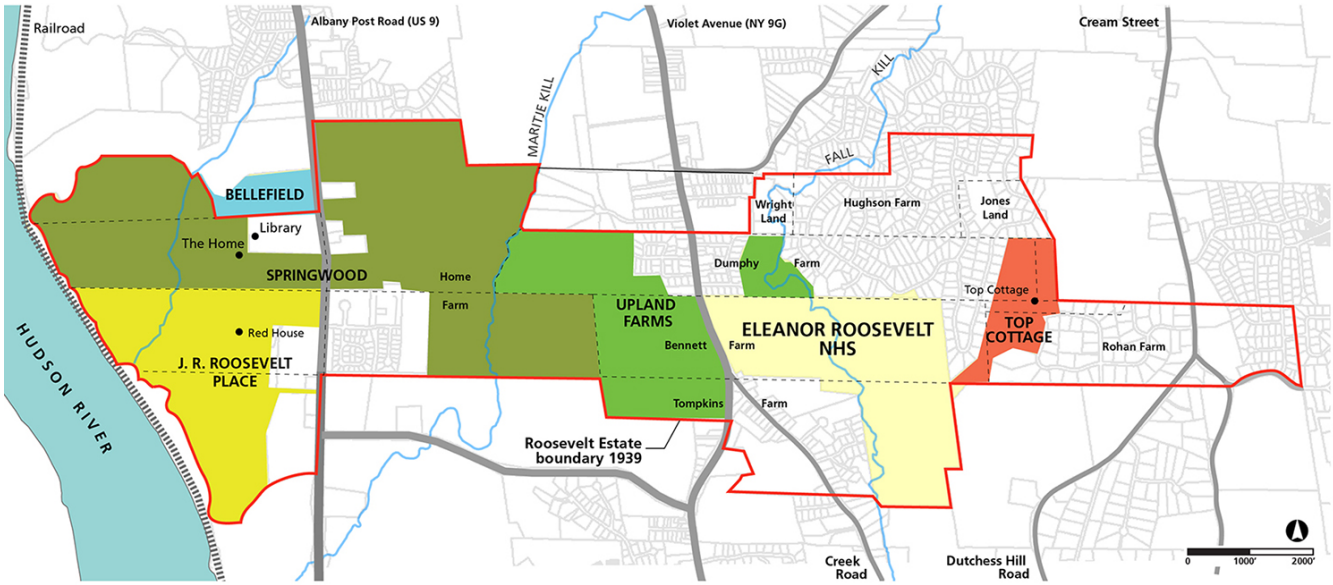
Do Adjacent Lands Contribute? Yes

Adjacent Lands Narrative:

Adjacent lands are lands outside the cultural landscape boundary, including lands inside or outside the park, contribute to the significance of the property. Adjacent lands that are part of the Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site, including lands that are part of the Upland Farms and Top Cottage inventory units, contribute to the historically rural and wooded context of the Val-Kill landscape. The portion of the Bennett Farm west of NY 9G was open fields during Mrs. Roosevelt's lifetime, but now is mostly wooded. The Harbourd Hills residential subdivision to the north of the site was laid out beginning in ca. 1953 during the site's period of significance (1924–1962). The rear entrance road (Cross Road) extends from a subdivision road (Roosevelt Road) and the site's tract 101-02 is Harbourd Hills Lot #1. The Lyon (ca. 1952) and Patrick (ca. 1952) subdivisions to the north and south of the site also are part of Val-Kill's historic context, although they reflect changes during the latter years of Mrs. Roosevelt's life and were a marked change from the rural character of the landscape that characterized most of the historic period. All three subdivisions, which are within the historic (1939) limits of the Roosevelt Estate, are screened from the Val-Kill's domestic core by woods.

The Val-Kill Weaving Cottage, located across Creek Road from the site at the intersection of NY 9G (part of the Neighborhood Business District zone), was part of Val-Kill Industries and was opened and operated by Nellie Johannesen as the Val-Kill Tea Room (Eleanor Roosevelt loaned her the money and she later paid the loan in full). Due to substantial alterations, including a major rebuilding after a recent fire, the property does not contribute due to a loss of historic integrity. The park's 2010 General Management Plan did not call for acquisition of the small tract. (Review comment, Futral, 8 November 2024)

Adjacent Lands Graphic:



Map showing relationship of Eleanor Roosevelt NHS (area in light yellow) to adjacent lands within the Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt NHS. Residential subdivisions within the historic (1939) limits of the Roosevelt Estate were laid out prior to Mrs. Roosevelt's death in 1962 and are therefore part of Val-Kill's historic context. (SUNY ESF)

National Register Information

National Register of Historic Places

Documentation Status: SHPO Documented

Documentation Narrative Description:

Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on May 26, 1977, as part of its designation as a national historic site. On March 20, 1980, National Register documentation was accepted by the Keeper of the National Register. The documentation identified national-level significance under Criterion A in the areas of Politics/Government and Social/Humanitarian for Mrs. Roosevelt's time spent there developing and refining her approaches to political and social issues as well as a refuge from public life, a place for self-renewal, and an informal setting to entertain and confer with world leaders. The period of significance was reported as 1924-1962, the year the stone cottage was completed to the year of Mrs. Roosevelt's death. The documentation identified two primary contributing features – Eleanor's House [now Val-Kill Cottage, The Factory] and the Stone Cottage – and described the Playhouse, Doll House, Stable-Garage, swimming pool, tennis court, and stone barbeque as important to the site's setting. The documentation also identified a wood garage/shed, tool shed [now East Garden Shed], potting shed [now West Garden Shed], and stone gateposts as present during the historic period, and the Curnan House, chicken coop, pheasant coop/pen, dog pen, and sheep shed as post-dating the historic period. The documentation provided a general overview of the cultural landscape including its natural features, woodlands, forest plantations, trails, and ponds. Additionally, the site's "undeveloped pastoral setting" and a trash dump were noted as providing information about the historic occupation of the site.

On September 24, 1996, the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) concurred with the NPS on the eligibility of seventeen additional landscape features related to circulation, buildings, structures, and small scale features as part of the NPS Historic Structures Inventory (formerly List of Classified Structures) program.

On August 29, 2005, the New York SHPO concurred with the findings of the CLI for Val-Kill. The CLI identified national-level significance under Criterion A in the areas of Politics/Government and Social History and Criterion B for Eleanor Roosevelt. The period of significance was identified as 1924-1962, which encompasses thirty-eight year period she was associated with the site. In addition to eleven contributing features identified in the 1980 National Register documentation and seventeen features in the 1996 Historic Structures Inventory, the CLI identified twenty additional contributing features related to vegetation, views and vistas, and small-scale features (see Analysis and Evaluation chapter). The 2005 CLI identifies historic resources that remain the primary features of the property but does not capture the expansion of park property that occurred in 2019. This added property on the east side of Valkill Drive has historic stone fences, remnants of the Rohan Farm fields, and forsythia shrubs along Val-kill Drive (town-owned former entrance road to Top Cottage), but these are continuations of historic resources and/or historic associated features that are presently documented in the National Register (Stone Wall Systems-Stone Fences; Rohan Farm Field; Top Cottage Grounds).

According to research conducted for this CLI Update and the categories of National Register documentation outlined in the CLI Professional Procedures Guide, the areas and periods of significance for Val-Kill are adequately documented in the National Register of Historic Places and through consultations with the New York SHPO. The site's historic resources are adequately documented. Therefore, for purposes of the CLI, the Val-Kill landscape is considered "SHPO-Documented."

Eligibility: Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination

08/29/2005

Concurrence Eligibility Date:

Concurrence Narrative:

Per Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (State Historic Preservation Office) concurred on August 29, 2005, with the National Park Service on findings of the Cultural Landscapes Inventory pertaining to landscape features evaluated as contributing or non-contributing, supplemental to the National Register inventory of resources.

Significance Level: National

Contributing: Individual

Classification: District

Statement of Significance for National Register of Historic Places:

Val-Kill is nationally significant in the areas of Politics/Government and Social History for its association with Eleanor Roosevelt, a woman who made significant contributions to 20th century American society and politics as an activist for humanitarian and social causes. Val-Kill is directly related to the development of Eleanor Roosevelt's public and private lives, as the place where her social and political views as well as her self-confidence blossomed. From the private environment of Val-Kill, where Mrs. Roosevelt surrounded herself with family and friends and where she had a buffer from the world of her husband's intensive political career, Mrs. Roosevelt evolved into an influential woman on a national and international level. As Val-Kill continued to play a defining role throughout her later life, the period of significance includes the entire thirty-eight year period she was associated with the site, from the time of the planning for Stone Cottage in 1924 until her death in 1962.

The earlier history of Val-Kill going back to the early 1920s is also an important part of Eleanor Roosevelt's association with the site. It was the place where she and husband Franklin Delano Roosevelt and their friends found refuge from the big house at Springwood and began to exercise their political convictions. One of these centered around helping the depressed rural economy by starting a cottage industry. The Roosevelts and Eleanor's friends Nancy Cook, Marion Dickerman, and Caroline O'Day envisioned Val-Kill Industries as a place to provide rural craftsmen with work that would allow them to stay in the country instead of migrating to cities in search of work, complementing the purpose of FDR's tree plantations that he envisioned as new crop for struggling farmers. After FDR's death in 1945, when she became known as the First Lady of the World. (FDR Library, https://www.fdrlibrary.org/er-biography) This is when Val-Kill was her primary home (she also maintained an apartment in Manhattan), where she hosted gatherings for family, activists, underserved youth, and politicians, including Nikita Khruschev and Marshall Tito, United Nations groups, boys from the Todhunter and Wiltwyk schools, and presidential candidate John F. Kennedy, among many others.

As evidenced in Mrs. Roosevelt's writings, including passages from her daily syndicated newspaper column, "My Day," she valued the landscape's tranquility and natural features. Shortly after completion of the Stone Cottage in 1926, Mrs. Roosevelt expressed her contentment with the place, writing to FDR that, "The peace of it is divine." (quoted in Torres 1980: 88) In 1938, she wrote,
"We entered our cottage at Hyde Park on Friday night, sat on our porch, looked at the reflection of the sunset on the water and basked in a feeling of complete peace and quiet." (Eleanor Roosevelt, "My Day," 6 June 1938)

She expressed a love for simple, natural occurrences and looked forward to cyclical displays of seasonal change.
"The lovely purple loose-strife, which grows in marshy ground, is just beginning to come out. It makes the marsh adjoining our little ponds a blaze of color, reflected in the water. I remember it all through the year

as one of the most brilliant of nature's shows." (Eleanor Roosevelt, "My Day," 21 July 1938)

Outdoor recreation played a key role in Mrs. Roosevelt's life at Val-Kill. The swimming pool and adjacent patio, along with the stone barbecue, tennis court, and play equipment south of Mrs. Roosevelt's cottage was the scene of numerous informal gatherings of family, friends, and dignitaries. She also used the grounds for growing flowers and vegetables in the cutting garden and maintained an informal palette of shrubs, bulbs, perennials, and seasonal flowers around her cottage and Stone Cottage. "I have missed the flowering of our lilacs and lilies of the valley here, but our pansies are still in bloom and the syringa bushes are most luxuriant and very fragrant." (Eleanor Roosevelt, "My Day," 15 June 1939) The informal character of the maintained landscape of the core of Val-Kill, especially after Nancy Cook and Marion Dickerman left Stone Cottage in 1947, is poignantly evocative of Mrs. Roosevelt's unpretentious and welcoming character.

The agricultural character of Val-Kill also remained important throughout Mrs. Roosevelt's life. The bucolic setting, which allowed for views across the landscape from the cottages, influenced the initial site selection and inspired Mrs. Roosevelt to actively keep the land productive. She supported her son, Elliott, in the establishment of Val-Kill Farms in 1947 to continue FDR's legacy of agriculture and forestry. Although the enterprise was short-lived, the fields and forests closest to Val-Kill remained intact while Elliott sold off the surrounding farmland to developers beginning in the early 1950s. After this time, Mrs. Roosevelt employed a caretaker who farmed the fields and pastures on the western part of Val-Kill extending to NY 9G.

The forested eastern and southern parts of the property were a cherished place for Eleanor Roosevelt: "If beauty is good for the soul, then I wish I could have taken the whole world to walk with me early Saturday morning in the woods at Hyde Park. These visions of sheer beauty make one wonder why we human beings make so much that is not beautiful in the world." (Eleanor Roosevelt, "My Day," January 26, 1949)

One trail, along FDR's woods roads, looped through the southern part of the Val-Kill property, passing tree plantations set out under FDR's direction by the New York State College of Forestry in the 1930s. Another looped through what Mrs. Roosevelt called the Secret Woods, which was a white pine plantation that FDR set out in 1914, north of the core of Val-Kill.

Val-Kill's relationship to the larger Roosevelt Estate was important aspect of the property. Though Val-Kill was always primarily associated with Mrs. Roosevelt, it functioned within the larger context of the family estate: as a place apart from the big house at Springwood, as tenant farms that FDR acquired in 1911 and 1925 for agriculture and forestry, as a connection between Springwood and Top Cottage, and as the center of family activity after most of the estate was sold for development following FDR's death in 1945. At the time of Eleanor Roosevelt's death in 1962, Val-Kill was the last Roosevelt family holding in Hyde Park (the J.R. Roosevelt Place south of Springwood, now partly within the Home of Franklin Delano Roosevelt National Historic Site, was then being prepared for sale).

The cultural landscape of Val-Kill retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to the end of Mrs. Roosevelt's life in 1962. While many of these aspects have changed to some extent since that time, overall, the landscape retains its significant characteristics and features, and still strongly evokes the appearance of a modest country retreat. Notable changes include the conversion of portions of open field to woods, loss of open water on the constructed ponds, and addition of park signs and two visitor parking areas. The historic feeling of the landscape has also changed due to the loss of residential and recreational uses, although some of this character has been brought back in recent years through reintroduction of uses and furnishings around the swimming pool. The Eleanor Roosevelt Center at Val-Kill, along with park interpretive displays in Stone Cottage, continue Mrs. Roosevelt's use of Val-Kill to promote her political and humanitarian causes. Growth and decline of trees and shrubs reflect historic cycles, except for loss of certain species, such as red pine, due to diseases or changed growing conditions. The park continues to maintain annual plantings in the cutting garden and has recently reintroduced them in the pool terrace and walled garden.

National Register Significance Criteria:

A - Associated with events significant to broad patterns of our history

B - Associated with lives of persons significant in our past

Area of Significance:

Area of Significance Category: Politics - Government

Area of Significance Subcategory:

Explanatory Narrative:

Area of Significance Category: Social History

Area of Significance Subcategory:

Explanatory Narrative:

National Register Criteria Consideration:

National Register Periods of Significance (with Historic Context Themes):

Time Period: CE 1924 - CE 1962

Historic Context Theme	Subtheme	Facet	Other Facet
Creating Social Institutions and Movements	Social and Humanitarian Movements	Civil Rights Movements	

Time Period: CE 1945 - CE 1962

Historic Context Theme	Subtheme	Facet	Other Facet
Shaping the Political Landscape	Political and Military Affairs After 1945	The United Nations	

NRIS Information:

NRIS Name:	Roosevelt, Eleanor, National Historic Site
NRIS ID:	80000357
Other Name:	Val-Kill
Primary Certification Date:	03/20/1980

State Register Documentation:

Identification Number:	90PR03602
Name:	Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site
Listed Date:	06/23/1980

National Historic Landmarks:

National Historic Landmark? No

Theme:

Contributing:

NHL ID:

NHL URL:

Date:

Statement of Significance for National Historic Landmark:

World Heritage Site:

World Heritage Site? No

Category:

WHS ID:

WHS URL:

Date:

Is Resource within a designated National Natural Landscape: No

Chronology and Physical History

Chronology:

Year	Event	Major Event Narrative
BCE 5000 - 1700	Inhabited	The east side of the Hudson Valley extending to the Connecticut River including the future site of Val-Kill is home to the Wappingers, an Eastern Algonquian Munsee-speaking people, and their ancestors. They live in seasonal camps and villages, and hunt, fish, gather, and farm.
CE 1609	Colonized	Henry Hudson explores the Hudson Valley, leading to the establishment of the Dutch colony of New Netherlands.
CE 1609 - 1655	Exploited	Conflicts and disease from European colonizer-settlers decimate the Wappinger people, including major defeats by the Dutch in the 1644 Pound Ridge Massacre and the 1655 Peach Tree War. After this last battle, most remaining Wappinger people leave the Hudson Valley.
CE 1664	Colonized	The British take New Netherlands and rename it New York.
CE 1683	Established	Dutchess County is chartered as one of the original counties of the Colony of New York.
CE 1697	Purchased/Sold	The Great Nine Partners Patent is granted to nine British land speculators; it stretches from the Hudson River east to near the Connecticut state line, occupying nearly one-third of Dutchess County, including Val-Kill.
CE 1699	Platted	The riverfront parcel of the Great Nine Partners Patent along the Hudson River is divided into nine so-called Water Lots, to allow each of the nine land speculator access to the Hudson River. This division established property lines that would define the boundaries of FDR’s upland farm properties, which extended from Water Lot 4 north to Water Lot 7 (Val-Kill on Water Lots 4 and 5).
CE 1730	Settled	Around this time, European settlers arrive in what is now Hyde Park village.
CE 1748	Settled	The Crooke and Everson families settle on Water Lots 5 and 6; their property includes the future Bennett Farm (site of Val-Kill).
CE 1793	Built	By this year, Creek Road (Violet Avenue/NY 9G) is the main road through the middle of the Water Lots.
CE 1793	Purchased/Sold	Around this time, the Tompkins family acquires a 248-acre parcel, occupying a portion of Water Lot 4 (southern part of Val-Kill) from the estate of Leonard Lespinard.
CE 1808	Platted	By this date, the east half of Water Lot 5 is divided (191-acre Bennett Farm on west and 133-acre Rohan Farm on east). The future Bennett Farm is owned by Maria Whiley. The Bennett farmhouse is on the west side of Violet Avenue (NY 9G), across from the future Val-Kill property.
CE 1867	Purchased/Sold	FDR's father, James Roosevelt, buys the 110-acre Wheeler estate, Brierstone, as the family country place, and renames it Springwood. The estate extends from the Hudson River east to the Bennett Farm.

Year	Event	Major Event Narrative
CE 1911	Purchased/Sold	FDR purchases the 194-acre Bennett Farm (current northern part of Val-Kill) from Willet E. Bennett. FDR retains the native hardwoods forest and old pastures for his forestry program.
CE 1914	Planted	FDR sets out his first forest plantation on the Bennett Farm: Plot D, five acres of white pine. Located north of the cottages, Mrs. Roosevelt calls it the Secret Woods.
CE 1920 - 1945	Inhabited	Moses Smith rents the Bennett Farm and uses it for dairy and vegetable production. His lease includes use of a tenant house on the current Val-Kill property. He remains FDR's tenant through 1945.
CE 1922	Inhabited	FDR, Eleanor Roosevelt, and their family and friends begin to use an old pasture along the east side of the Fall Kill on the Bennett Farm as a picnic spot in the years after FDR contracted poliomyelitis in summer 1921.
CE 1923 - 1924	Built	FDR extends Farm Road from Springwood through the Bennett Farm to provide a direct route to the Bennett Farm and the picnic spot along the Fall Kill. FDR also replaces the old corduroy bridge over the Fall Kill with a more substantial bridge to provide better access to the picnic spot.
CE 1924	Planned	In summer of 1924 Eleanor and her friends Nancy Cook and Marion Dickerman develop an idea with FDR of making a year-round retreat at the Bennett Farm by building a cottage there. The women name their retreat Val-Kill, the Dutch spelling of Fall Kill meaning fall (falling) creek. They begin improvements that year.
CE 1924	Built	A swimming pool, 50' x 25' and up to 6' deep with concrete sides and bottom, is built in the bank below Stone Cottage. It is supplied with water from the Fall Kill.
CE 1924	Altered	The bridge crossing the Fall Kill is rebuilt and a dam is constructed to create a pond.
CE 1925 - 1926	Built	Stone Cottage is built at the picnic spot overlooking the Fall Kill. Designed by Henry Toombs in the Dutch Colonial Revival style, with substantial input from FDR. Stone Cottage serves as a weekend retreat for Mrs. Roosevelt and a full-time home for Nancy Cook and Marion Dickerman.
CE 1925	Purchased/Sold	FDR purchases the 192-acre Tompkins Farm along Creek Road/Violet Avenue (southeast part of Val-Kill) from Sarah Tompkins to preserve the old place and demonstrate agricultural and forestry improvement.
CE 1926	Established	Eleanor Roosevelt, Nancy Cook, Marion Dickerman, and Caroline O'Day establish Val-Kill Industries as a means to revive craft industries and the local rural economy.
CE 1926	Inhabited	FDR executes a lease for eight acres at Val-Kill with Eleanor, Marion Dickerman, and Nancy Cook, which allows use of the property for residential, industrial, and manufacturing purposes for their life term. Under the lease, the women own the improvements and are responsible for maintenance.

Year	Event	Major Event Narrative
CE 1926	Built	A two-story stucco-sided factory, 25’ x 50’, is built according to plans by Henry Toombs northwest of the Stone Cottage to house Val-Kill Industries furniture and forge shops.
CE 1928	Expanded	Two additions to the factory are built to accommodate a mortise machine and lathe, and a finishing room.
CE 1928	Built	A three-car garage and tool storage space, used as the Val-Kill Industries forge in the 1930s and later known as the Playhouse, is built behind the Factory.
CE 1929	Expanded	A third addition to the factory, a separate two-story building later connected to the original building, is constructed for woodworking and finishing space.
CE 1929 - 1933	Established	FDR and Professor Nelson Brown execute plans for a cooperative partnership with the New York State College of Forestry at Syracuse University for demonstration forestry at the Tompkins Farm. The College establishes two experimental plantations, Plots 31 and 32, in a swamp south of Val-Kill straddling the Bennett-Tompkins boundary using northern white-cedar, tulip-poplar, red oak, and black walnut.
CE 1930	Expanded	The Fall Kill is dredged to expand the area of open water, creating Val-Kill Pond (lower pond area).
CE 1931	Built	New York State improves NY 9G (Creek Road and Violet Avenue) through widening and building of a bypass around Dead Man’s Curve on the Tompkins Farm. The bypass leaves the Tompkins farmhouse in an island that would be used to build the Val-Kill Weaving Cottage.
CE 1931	Planted	An orchard is planted on the Tompkins Farm southwest of the bridge over the Fall Kill. It includes apple trees, pear trees, and berries.
CE 1933	Built	The Val-Kill Industries Weaving Cottage is erected at the intersection of Creek Road and Violet Avenue (NY 9G) (outside current Val-Kill boundaries).
CE 1933 - 1935	Built	FDR has Cross Road (present back entrance road) built from Val Kill to the Dumphy Farm, and by 1935 connects it with a new road through his newly acquired Dumphy Farm property (present Roosevelt Road) that extended east to Dutchess Hill (Top Cottage Site).
CE 1933	Built	The stone barbecue, designed by Nancy Cook and Henry J. Toombs, is built in the picnic grounds within a birch-cedar stand west of the Factory.
CE 1934	Built	The Val-Kill forge is built for the production of pewter items, in an extension to the garage (Playhouse).
CE 1934	Altered	The bridge and dam on the Fall Kill are rebuilt.
CE 1935	Purchased/Sold	FDR purchases the east half of Dumphy Farm, 74.2 acres due north of Val-Kill, from the estate of Thomas Newbold.
CE 1935	Built	A new swimming pool, 50’ x 20’ and up to 9’ deep with a water filtration system, is built south of Stone Cottage, along with a planted terrace. The pool is designed by M.K. Hasbrouck, also responsible for the swimming pool at the White House.

Year	Event	Major Event Narrative
CE 1936	Abandoned	Val-Kill Industries closes after a ten-year run.
CE 1936	Built	A bluestone patio is built on the swimming pool side of Stone Cottage. It is covered in season by a yellow awning and set with outdoor furniture during Nancy and Marion's tenure at Stone Cottage. Bluestone walks between the cottages are probably built at this same time.
CE 1936 - 1937	Altered	Mrs. Roosevelt converts the Factory into her own cottage, with a separate apartment. The conversion included connecting the two, two-story buildings, with a modest entrance facing the rear of the building.
CE 1936 - 1937	Expanded	Nancy Cook and Marion Dickerman expand Stone Cottage with an enlargement of a second floor bedroom with a dormer and addition of a living room wing and walled garden with a loggia on the east side. They also add a circular entrance drive.
CE 1937	Built	FDR has a road built extending east from Val-Kill to Dutchess Hill, where he would build Top Cottage in 1939.
CE 1937	Built	A cutting garden and a small greenhouse are built east of the Playhouse.
CE 1937	Built	The Stable-Garage, an unpainted concrete-block multi-bay building, is built along Cross Road behind the cutting garden.
CE 1937	Expanded	The Fall Kill is dredged again to create an upper pond area that wraps around the north side of the Val-Kill domestic grounds.
CE 1937	Built	A swing set and see-saw are installed on the picnic grounds between the barbecue and Stone Cottage.
CE 1939	Planned	Congress passes joint resolution (No. 30, 76th Congress, 1st Session, 53 Stat. 1062-5) that authorizes development of the FDR Presidential Library and allows federal agencies to accept donations of any part of the Roosevelt Estate for use in connection with any designated function of the federal government.
CE 1939	Built	A sprinkler system is installed for lawn and gardens.
CE 1939	Built	A small dock is constructed west of the bridge for boat docking and sunbathing.
CE 1939	Built	FDR builds Top Cottage on Dutchess Hill, uphill and due east of Val-Kill. Designed by FDR and architect Henry Toombs, who also designed the Val-Kill cottages.
CE 1940	Built	Around this time, a loop road off the road to Top Cottage extending through the woods of the Tompkins Farm (southern part of Val-Kill) is constructed.
CE 1940	Built	Around this time, a potting shed is built on the west side of the cutting garden, and a storage shed for garden tools and other equipment is built off the east side.
CE 1940	Built	A flagpole is installed on the front lawn near the pond's edge and play equipment.

Year	Event	Major Event Narrative
CE 1942	Built	The White House Signal Detachment, formed by the Department of War on March 25, 1942, completes an emergency communication system throughout the Roosevelt Estate. The system includes telephone lines, electronic eyes, cable crash barriers, and Jeep roads designed to protect the President while at Hyde Park, including Val-Kill and Top Cottage. Jeep roads are laid out in the woods east of Val-Kill.
CE 1945	Land Transfer	FDR dies on April 14. Shortly after, Mrs. Roosevelt makes Val-Kill her primary home and Elliott Roosevelt moves to Top Cottage.
CE 1945	Removed	Wartime security system features are removed or disabled throughout the Roosevelt Estate following the end of the National Emergency on September 11, 1945.
CE 1945	Planned	In October, Professor Nelson Brown meets with Eleanor Roosevelt to go over tree planting for the spring 1946 season, and she approves an order for 500 Nikko fir, 5,000 Canadian white spruce, and 500 white fir.
CE 1946 - 1947	Planned	Elliott Roosevelt, with the support of Eleanor Roosevelt, develops plans for Val-Kill Farms as a high-production commercial livestock, dairy, and Christmas tree operation. The other part of his plans includes commercial and residential development along the Post Road at Springwood.
CE 1947	Land Transfer	The Roosevelt Estate outside of the federally-owned Library and Home properties and the J.R. Roosevelt Place is turned over to the trustees of FDR's legal estate for sale to the highest bidder. The trustees sell the eastern part of the Roosevelt Estate, 842.20 acres, to Eleanor Roosevelt; she immediately conveys the same to Elliott Roosevelt for development of Val-Kill Farms. The tract includes all of the estate land east of the Maritje Kill (between US 9 and NY 9G). Eleanor retains an informal agreement for life tenancy at Val-Kill.
CE 1947	Inhabited	As ownership of the Roosevelt Estate changes, Nancy Cook and Marion Dickerman convey to Eleanor Roosevelt their interest in the Val-Kill buildings and other improvements as conveyed through FDR's lease executed in 1926 and move out of their long-time home at Stone Cottage.
CE 1948 - 1952	Developed	IBM opens a second factory outside Poughkeepsie, a 250,000-square foot manufacturing plant that joined the original Poughkeepsie Lab opened in 1944 on the former Kenyon estate, Cliffdale, south of the city. IBM added another 632,000 square feet of manufacturing space in 1952; Eleanor Roosevelt is the guest speaker at the dedication.
CE 1949	Land Transfer	Elliot Roosevelt begins to sell off assets of Val-Kill Farms, beginning with the Val-Kill Tea Room (former Val-Kill Weaving Cottage) along Violet Avenue (NY 9G).
CE 1950	Built	A tennis and badminton court are added west of Mrs. Roosevelt's Cottage.

Year	Event	Major Event Narrative
CE 1950	Abandoned	Elliott Roosevelt abandons the entire enterprise of Val-Kill Farms.
CE 1950	Inhabited	John Roosevelt, his wife Anne, and their four children move from California to Val-Kill and make Stone Cottage their home. They add a dormer on the front roof to expand the second floor living space.
CE 1952 - 1960	Developed	Clarence Lyon begins development of a 40-unit single-family residential subdivision on the Tompkins Farm along Creek Road south of Val-Kill on property he purchased from Elliott Roosevelt.
CE 1952 - 1960	Developed	Charles Patrick begins development of a 54-unit residential subdivision on the Dumphy Farm north of Val-Kill on property he purchased from Elliott Roosevelt.
CE 1952	Land Transfer	Elliott Roosevelt sells half of his interest in the 179-acre tract on the Bennett and Tompkins farms containing Val-Kill to his brother, John Roosevelt.
CE 1952	Land Transfer	Elliott Roosevelt sells Top Cottage and 117.53 surrounding acres on the Bennett and Rohan farms east of Val-Kill to Agnes Potter.
CE 1952	Land Transfer	Elliott Roosevelt sells his remaining estate property to developer William Kay, except for 179 acres that includes Val-Kill.
CE 1953	Developed	William Kay, through his Poughkeepsie construction firm, Kay-Reifler, begins development of a large, 300-unit residential subdivision named Harbourd Hills on his 216-acre property east of Violet Avenue and north and east of Val-Kill. The development severs the connection between Val-Kill and Top Cottage.
CE 1953	Purchased/Sold	John Roosevelt purchases Harbourd Hills Lot #1 on Roosevelt Road to secure access to the rear entrance road to Val-Kill (Cross Road).
CE 1955	Built	Around this time, Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation builds a high-tension power line through the Val-Kill property, extending east-west along the northern edge and then turning south through the eastern woods.
CE 1960	Land Transfer	Elliott Roosevelt sells his remaining half interest in the 179 -acre Val-Kill property to John Roosevelt's wife, Anne Clark Roosevelt, ending his ownership of Roosevelt Estate lands.
CE 1960	Built	Around this time, John Roosevelt creates a rectangular flower garden south of the tennis court so his mother can see flowers from her bedroom window.
CE 1962	Inhabited	Eleanor Roosevelt's life at Val-Kill ends with her death on November 7 at her apartment on East 74th Street in Manhattan.
CE 1962 - 1965	Altered	John Roosevelt converts his mother's cottage to rental apartments. Most likely at this time, he removes the loggia from the walled garden and builds a laundry room for use by his tenants.
CE 1963	Destroyed	The Bennett Farm tenant farmhouse is destroyed by fire.

Year	Event	Major Event Narrative
CE 1963	Abandoned	The cutting garden is abandoned; John Roosevelt builds a driveway through the site to connect with Cross Road (rear entrance road).
CE 1964	Land Transfer	John Roosevelt sells a 2.97-acre tract of the Val-Kill property (Bennett Farm) north of the entrance road to Charles Curnan, groundskeeper of Val-Kill.
CE 1964	Built	Charles Curnan builds a house on his newly acquired property to replace the tenant farmhouse along Val-Kill Lane.
CE 1965 - 1964	Inhabited	Following his divorce from Anne, John Roosevelt moves out of Stone Cottage and converts it to rental apartments.
CE 1965	Built	The Curnan family develops a farming operation in the fields north of the entry road that includes addition of a sheep pond, sheep barn, chicken coop, dog pen, and pheasant coop.
CE 1965	Built	Around this time, a dam is built on the Fall Kill near the former south boundary of the Tompkins Farm, creating a pond that borders residential properties in the Lyon subdivision and Val-Kill.
CE 1970	Land Transfer	John Roosevelt reacquires the 2.97-acre parcel he sold to caretaker Charles Curnan in 1964.
CE 1970	Land Transfer	John and Anne Roosevelt sell the 179.77-acre Val-Kill property to Rosario Dolce and William Squires, who plan to build a retirement community on the site.
CE 1970 - 1980	Altered	Approximately two-thirds of the fields and pastures north of the entry road covert to woods through natural succession; upper Val-Kill pond shifts from open water to mostly wetlands.
CE 1975	Established	The Hyde Park Visual Environment Committee forms the Cottage Committee to promote the preservation of Val-Kill.
CE 1976	Established	Eleanor Roosevelt's Val-Kill, Inc. (ERVK) is chartered to perpetuate values championed by the First Lady of the World.
CE 1977	Established	Congress passes legislation establishing Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site, and the federal government acquires the 179.77-acre Val-Kill property through eminent domain.
CE 1977 - 1984	Rehabilitated	NPS begins rehabilitation of Val-Kill, including restoration and reconstruction of landscape features. The buildings are returned to their historic appearance and adapted for public use, and select gardens and plantings are reestablished. Lighting is installed along the earthen roads in the core area. The swimming pool is permanently covered due to safety concerns.
CE 1979	Land Transfer	NPS acquires Harbourd Hills Lot #1 on the former Dumphy Farm from John Roosevelt to provide a rear entry to ELRO from Roosevelt Road.
CE 1980	Demolished	Around this time, the Curnan farm buildings erected in ca.1965 are demolished, but the Curnan house is left standing.

Year	Event	Major Event Narrative
CE 1984	Memorialized	Irene Boyd Roosevelt adds a small granite and bronze plaque near the swimming pool spurt in memory of her husband, John A. Roosevelt (died 1981).
CE 1984	Established	Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site opens to the public. ERVK maintains offices in Stone Cottage.
CE 1984	Altered	The park, through the Federal Highways Administration, levels and widens the entry road.
CE 1985	Built	The park builds a visitor parking lot on the eastern half of the Val-Kill orchard and a staff lot east of the Stable-Garage.
CE 1998 - 2007	Built	The Beaverkill Conservancy acquires a 1-acre parcel outside the historic boundaries of the Roosevelt Estate in 1998 to allow for a trail to reconnect Val-Kill and Top Cottage; the Conservancy conveys the land to NPS in 2002. NPS opens the trail in 2007.
CE 1999	Altered	The entry road is resurfaced with an asphalt base and chip seal topcoat. The parking visitor lot is expanded to the east to provide more parking and room for bus turn-around and parking.
CE 2002	Land Transfer	Dominick Ferrari sells the Beaverkill Conservancy (Open Space Institute) an undevelopable 18.34-acre parcel along the Fall Kill within the Harbourd Hills subdivision; the Conservancy conveys it to the park, which incorporates it into the Home of FDR NHS.
CE 2007	Demolished	The 1964 Curnan house is demolished for construction of the new ERVK conference/office building.
CE 2007 - 2008	Built	The Eleanor Roosevelt Center at Val-Kill building and parking area are constructed at the site of the 1964 Curnan house. ERVK moves its offices out of Stone Cottage.
CE 2009	Restored	The western part of the orchard is replanted.
CE 2011	Removed	The eastern pond edge along the core of Val-Kill is cleared to reopen views of the water from Stone Cottage.
CE 2012	Reconstructed	The park removes the ca.1962 concrete wall and laundry addition on the north side of the Stone Cottage walled garden to reconstruct the 1936 loggia.
CE 2013	Planted	The screen of red pines around the swimming pool terrace, which were replanted in ca.1984, are replaced with Eastern red-cedars.
CE 2014	Rehabilitated	The cutting garden walks and beds are rehabilitated; the cedar hedge is replaced several years later.
CE 2017 - 2018	Rehabilitated	The 1935 swimming pool is uncovered and returned to open water through installation of a mesh floor that addresses safety concerns. The Stone Cottage patio is relaid in new bluestone to enhance accessibility and is furnished with period-appropriate patio furniture. Plantings are reestablished on the pool terrace.
CE 2020	Rehabilitated	Around this time, the park resurfaces the tennis court and replaces deteriorated wire mesh on the backstops.
CE 2022	Built	New NPS-standard interpretive waysides are added to the grounds.

Physical History:

INTRODUCTION

This section provides a concise history of the physical development and evolution of the Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site landscape and its larger setting within the Roosevelt Estate. The history is organized by the following periods: Before the Roosevelts, to 1867; The Roosevelt Estate Prior to Val-Kill, 1867–1924; Val-Kill During Eleanor Roosevelt's Lifetime, 1924–1962; Val-Kill after Eleanor Roosevelt's Lifetime (1962–2025).

BEFORE THE ROOSEVELTS, to 1867

The origins of the Val-Kill landscape trace back to the last ice age more than 12,500 year ago, when glaciers shaped the land and glacial meltwaters formed Lake Albany, a large water body that covered much of the Hudson Valley for 4,000 to 5,000 years. Erosion caused by Lake Albany and the primeval Hudson River formed broad terraces. Within the Roosevelt Estate, these included a lower terrace along the Post Road at Springwood and an upper terrace along Violet Avenue at Val-Kill. Streams ran through the terraces, including the Fall Kill, derived from the Dutch meaning fall (falling) stream. Above the river terraces, corresponding to the land east of Val-Kill that includes Top Cottage, the land transitioned to foothills of the Taconic Mountains. (HRS 2011: 54-56,67)

For centuries prior to European contact, the Algonquian-speaking Wappinger people and their ancestors lived along the east bank of the tidal Hudson River, which they called Muhheakantuck, “river that flows two ways,” and lands east to the Connecticut River. The Wappingers were agriculturalists who lived in villages, as well as hunters and gatherers who lived in seasonal camps. While archaeological evidence of Wappinger habitation of Val-Kill and its surroundings has not been documented, there is evidence that they farmed the lower terrace along the Post Road, so they may well have farmed the upper terrace along Violet Avenue. They also likely utilized the wetland resources present along the Fall Kill. (CLR 1998: 11; HRS 2011: 56-57; Review comment, Muehlbauer, 8 November 2024)

In 1609, the Dutch East India Company hired Henry Hudson to explore the Muhheakantuck region. One Native American account described the explorers and their ships as “tall floating cloud-houses carrying hairy, pallid, ghostlike men.” (Kelley, 2004) Hudson’s explorations of what was renamed the Hudson River led to the Dutch establishment of the colony of New Netherlands. After initial friendly interactions, relations between the Dutch and Native Americans including the Wappingers soured as competition over land and resources increased. The introduction of European plagues and firearms worsened the situation. After a battle in 1643, the defeated Wappingers negotiated a treaty in 1645, although conflict continued for the next two decades. Decimated by war and disease, the colonizers forced most of the Wappingers out of the Hudson Valley by the late 17th century. Some of the Wappinger people settled in the Stockbridge area, joining other native people who had been forced off their traditional lands. Today their descendants include members of the Stockbridge-Munsee Community Band of Mohican Indians. (HRS 2011: 57; Review comment, Muehlbauer, 8 November 2024)

The Dutch in turn were defeated when Great Britain gained control of the New Netherlands colony following the Second Anglo-Dutch War of 1664. King Charles II of England awarded the colony to his brother, James, Duke of York. Established as the Province of New York, the colony did not have a representative assembly until 1683, at which time it was organized into twelve counties. The region that included the Roosevelt Estate was within Dutchess County, which at the time had not yet been granted to British landholders. (HRS 2011: 57)

The recorded European history of the Roosevelt Estate lands including Val-Kill begins in the late 17th century. On May 27, 1697, Benjamin Fletcher, Governor of the Province of New York, granted a patent to a partnership of nine men for the purposes of speculative land sale and selling of resources including lumber and fur. The grant encompassed approximately 149,000 acres of Dutchess County, stretching six miles along the Hudson River and east fourteen miles to the boundary of New York and Connecticut. On May 8, 1699, the grant was divided into thirty-six principle lots. One of the lots along the Hudson River was further subdivided into nine long and narrow parcels known as water lots to ensure each partner equal access to the river, which was the primary source of transportation. Each of the nine water lots encompassed approximately 1,000 acres and measured one-third mile along the Hudson River, and four-and-a-half miles eastward. The existing Val-Kill landscape spanned Water Lots 4 and 5 (Figure 1). Initial European settlement after the Wappinger people were forced out occurred in the mid-18th century on the western portions of the water lots closest to the Hudson River, corresponding with the current Springwood and J.R. Roosevelt Place units of the Home of FDR National Historic Site. By 1793, the Val-Kill property was owned by the Crooke and Lespinard families. (HRS 2011: 63,65-66)

In the early 19th century, the Bennett Farm portion of Val-Kill, corresponding with northern half of the current site and the eastern part of the Crooke family property on the southern half of water lot 5, was subdivided as a separate farm owned by the Whiley family, who erected their farmhouse on the west side of Creek Road (NY 9G), later known as the Bennett farmhouse, or Woodlawns (not extant). The property changed ownership numerous times before being sold to Willet G. Bennett in 1868, one year after the Roosevelts settled in Hyde Park. The Tompkins Farm portion of Val-Kill, corresponding with southern part of the current site and the eastern part of the Lespinard property on portions of water lots 4 and 5, was sold to the Tompkins family around 1793. The Tompkins built their farmhouse on the west side of Creek Road (house still exists, south of NY 9G intersection), and their barns across the road (south of current Val-Kill boundary). They continued to own and farm the property through the early 20th century.

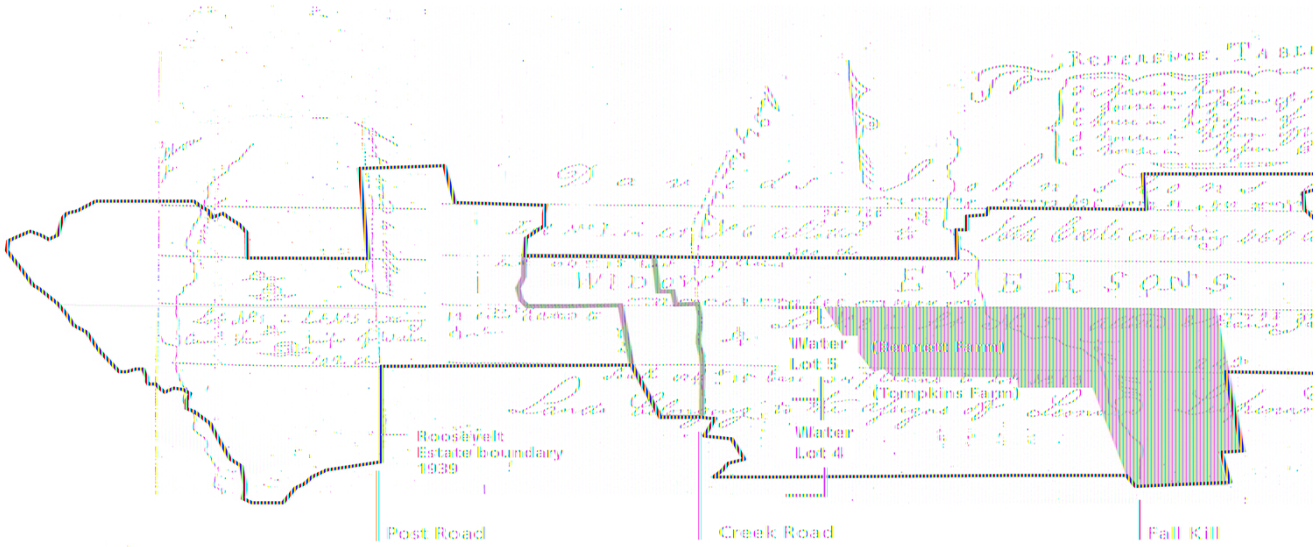


Figure 1. Detail of a survey of land ownership as of 1793 illustrating relationship of water lot boundaries to future boundaries of Val-Kill (shaded green) and the Roosevelt Estate (red outline). (Dutchess County Real Property Records, Book 12, pages 134-135, annotated by SUNY ESF)

THE ROOSEVELT ESTATE PRIOR TO VAL-KILL, 1867–1924

In 1867, James Roosevelt, FDR's father, moved with his wife Rebecca and son Rosy Roosevelt to Brierstone, their new country place in Hyde Park that they acquired from the Wheeler family. The Roosevelts, who also maintained a home in New York City, renamed the estate Springwood, which included two main houses (the Home and Red House) and domestic grounds west of the Post Road, often referred to as the park component of a river estate; and the estate farm east of the Post Road that the Roosevelts called the Home Farm. By 1886, Springwood encompassed about 750 acres, extending for over a mile to the east beyond the Maritje Kill to the boundaries of the Bennett and Tompkins farms (west of current Val-Kill site). In August 1877, Rebecca Roosevelt died, and three years later on October 7, 1880, James married Sara Delano. On January 30, 1882, Sara gave birth to her only son, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. (HRS 2011: 81; CLR 1998: 40)

On December 8, 1900, James Roosevelt died at the age of seventy-two and left most of Springwood to Sara Delano Roosevelt for her "use and enjoyment," and upon her death, to FDR. Sara Roosevelt continued to live at and run Springwood as her husband had wished while Franklin completed his studies. On March 17, 1905, Franklin married Anna Eleanor Roosevelt, President Theodore Roosevelt's niece, who was born on October 1, 1885 in New York City. Eleanor's parents had died when she was a young child, and she was raised by her grandmother at her Hudson River country home, Oak Terrace, between Germantown and Tivoli about twenty miles north of Hyde Park. After completing her schooling abroad and becoming involved in social service work back in New York City, she began her family with Franklin, bearing six children born between 1906 and 1916. The family lived much of the year at Springwood with Sara Roosevelt, who remained a prominent figure in their lives and in the management of the Hyde Park estate. In New York City, the family shared a five-story townhouse at 49 East 65th Street that was a Christmas gift from Sara in 1907. (FDR Library, https://www.fdrlibrary.org/er-biography; CLR 1998: 40)

Franklin D. Roosevelt had a keen interest in rural society and saw conservation and forestry in particular as a means to help sustain the rural economy by increasing the productivity of the land. In 1911, he launched a forestry program that included managing the existing forests and planting crops of trees, known as plantations, on worn-out agricultural fields and other land on the Springwood estate. As part of his plans for agricultural improvement and forestry, he made plans to acquire farms of his own, where he planned to practice forestry on land that better represented the problems of typical small farms with worn-out soils and declining productivity. In 1911, FDR acquired his first farm on the uplands directly east of the Springwood estate from Willet E. Bennett, whose family had owned the property since 1868. The 191-acre farm extended east across the Fall Kill and included active and abandoned farm fields and woods. FDR leased the farmstead on the east side of Violet Avenue and fields to farmers; in 1920, his leased the property to Moses Smith, who would remain on the farm for the next quarter century and used it for dairy and raising vegetables. The Bennett farmhouse, an early 19th-century two-story three-bay house with a front porch, was opposite the entry drive to Val-Kill and would be a familiar sight to Eleanor Roosevelt as she came and went from Val-Kill (Figure 2).

On the eastern part of the Bennett Farm, corresponding with the northern part of the current Val-Kill property, a farm road, presently Val-Kill Lane, provided access and crossed the Fall Kill on a corduroy (log) bridge. Along this road, were ditched pastures to the north and cultivated fields to the south that Moses Smith often used to grow corn. At its intersection with the present drive to the Eleanor Roosevelt Center at Val-Kill (ERVK), there was a tenant farmhouse dating to the 19th century. East beyond the Fall Kill was a fifty-year-old woodlot of red oak, white oak, hickory, chestnut oak, and American chestnut—the latter a species that was being decimated by chestnut blight that began to spread during the 1910s. In the lowlands along the Fall Kill, there were old pastures characterized by successional gray birch, red-cedar, prickly ash, sugar maple, oak, and witch hazel (Figure 3). In 1914, three years into his forestry program, FDR set out a large plantation of white pine (Plot D) at the northwest corner of these old pastures, bounded by the wetlands of the Fall Kill to the west and the north property line—a place Eleanor Roosevelt later called her Secret Woods. The white pine, ordered from state nurseries, covered 5 acres, requiring approximately 6,000 trees. (HRS 2011: 157-157)



Figure 2. The Bennett farmhouse located across Violet Avenue (NY 9G) from the Val-Kill entrance road, looking northwest, ca. 1945. The house was demolished in ca.1974. (Collection of Clifford M. Smith)



Figure 3. The successional old-field character of the Bennett Farm along the Fall Kill prior to the development of Val-Kill, looking south, ca.1924. (NPX 48 22 4039 (7), Franklin D. Roosevelt Library)

VAL-KILL DURING ELEANOR ROOSEVELT'S LIFETIME, 1924–1962

Origins of Val-Kill and Val-Kill Industries:
In an old pasture across the corduroy bridge and south of the 1914 white pine plantation, Eleanor, FDR, and their family and friends created a picnic spot in the years after FDR contracted polio in 1921. For Eleanor especially, this location, on land owned by FDR, provided a retreat from her mother-in-law's realm at Springwood. FDR began to improve access to this area from Springwood by 1923–1924, when he had Farm Road extended from the Springwood Home Farm to the Bennett Farm, connecting to the farm road that crossed the Fall Kill. FDR had the old corduroy bridge over the Fall Kill rebuilt and cleared some of the old-field succession to create open ground for picnicking. It was during the summer of 1924 that Eleanor and her friends Nancy Cook and Marion Dickerman developed an idea with FDR of making the site a year-round retreat by building a cottage there. The women named their retreat Val-Kill, the Dutch spelling of Fall Kill meaning fall (falling) creek. They began improvements that year, including construction of a swimming pool near the east bank of the Fall Kill completed in 1925 that had concrete walls and was fed by the stream. As work on the pool was underway, they commissioned architect Henry Toombs, of the firm of McKim, Mead and White, to design the cottage based on a sketch by FDR. The cottage reflected not only the rural setting of Val-Kill and FDR's interest in Dutch Colonial architecture, but also the American Arts and Crafts Movement, which stressed pre-industrial methods of construction and natural materials. Construction of the house, later known as Stone Cottage, was underway by July 1925 and was substantially completed by the middle of the next year (Figure 4). (NR 1980, Sec.7-2; HRS 2011: 157-158)

As construction of Stone Cottage was underway, Eleanor, Nancy, and Marion, together with another friend Caroline O'Day, began to implement plans for establishing craft industries at Val-Kill to help revive the struggling rural economy and perpetuate early American crafts. Much like FDR's intent for his forestry program that he had begun in 1911, the women's enterprise was envisioned as a way of supporting struggling local farmers by offering skills and supplemental income. Named Val-Kill Industries, the non-profit enterprise initially developed around Nancy Cook's interest in furniture making and included production of all the furnishings for Stone Cottage. Cook had studied art at Syracuse University and was likely a student of Irene Sargent, a close associate of Gustav Stickley, a leader in the American Arts and Crafts Movement. At first conceived to be housed in a wing of the Stone Cottage, the three women soon decided to erect a separate building northeast of Stone Cottage to house the furniture factory, a garage, and living quarters for workers. The modest two-story stucco-clad concrete-block building, known as the "Factory" or "Shops," was designed by Henry Toombs and construction began in spring 1926, before work ended on the Stone Cottage (Figure 5). Within three years, a second two-story building was added along with several small wings to accommodate the growing business, which also included a forge for production of metalware, and a weaving shop. The forge was built in 1934 as an extension to the garage erected in 1928 (current Playhouse) and the weaving shop (later the Val-Kill Tea Room) was built in 1933 at the intersection of Creek Road and Violet Avenue, outside current park boundaries. (CLR 2005: 60; NPS, Val-Kill Industries, https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/val-kill-industries.htm; HRS 2011: 158)

On January 26, 1926, as planning for Val-Kill Industries was underway, FDR entered into a written lease agreement with Eleanor, Nancy, and Marion for the Val-Kill property, encompassing approximately 8 acres of FDR's Bennett Farm in a four-sided parcel centered on the bridge over the Fall Kill and extending to the south property line with the Tompkins Farm that FDR had acquired the prior year. The lease, which was not legally acknowledged in Dutchess County land records, allowed the three women to use the property for residential, industrial, or manufacturing purposes for their life term, upon the end of which the lease would cease and the property would revert to use by FDR or his estate. Under the lease, the women owned the improvements on the property and were responsible for maintenance. An understood aspect of the lease was the right of access along Val-Kill Lane, the Bennett farm road, by Moses Smith and FDR so they could access farm fields and managed forests. (HRS 2011: 159)

Beginning in 1930, five years after his purchase of the Tompkins Farm, FDR began a cooperative relationship with the New York State College of Forestry at Syracuse University to establish experiment and demonstration plantations on the Tompkins Farm at the highly visible intersection of Creek Road and Violet Avenue, which had been designated as a state highway. Outside of this area, the college established two experimental plantations of tulip poplar, Northern white cedar, and walnut in a swampy area on the Bennett-Tompkins boundary a short distance south and east of Val-Kill in

1930-1931, within the present limits of Val-Kill. (HRS 2011: 229)

During the early years of Val-Kill, when Eleanor, Nancy, and Marion shared use of Stone Cottage, the grounds were managed in an informal style, characterized by numerous Eastern red-cedar trees and gray birch that were retained from the old-field successional growth that preexisted Val-Kill (see Figure 4). With Val-Kill still serving as a primarily seasonal retreat and with the activity of Val-Kill Industries, the landscape remained rustic and simple, with recreational features including the creek-side swimming pool and a badminton court. In 1930, the Fall Kill upstream of the bridge was dredged to create a larger pond, and a dock for canoes was maintained on the shoreline near the bridge. Beyond this core area, Moses Smith continued to farm the agricultural fields and pastures that extended west to NY 9G. In 1931, an orchard of apples and pears was planted west of the bridge over the Fall Kill, just beyond the stone wall that delineated the boundary with the Tompkins Farm, and was maintained as part of the Springwood Home Farm. The women also used the orchard to grow berries and grapes. (CLR 2005: 49-50)

Val-Kill during the Presidential Years:
After FDR's inauguration, when Eleanor assumed the role of First Lady, the grounds of Val-Kill saw several ongoing improvements. In 1933, a large stone barbecue, designed by Nancy Cook and Henry Toombs, was built in the picnic grounds north of Stone Cottage in an area known as the peninsula, and a new road, which FDR called Cross Road (present back entrance road), was built at the rear of the Val-Kill buildings, connecting Val-Kill Lane to the Dumphy Farm that FDR was planning to acquire. Two years later, a new swimming pool was built on the recommendation of White House doctors, who felt the stream-fed pool posed a threat to the President's health. Designed by M.K. Hasbrouck, who also designed the White House pool, the new concrete pool was located immediately south of Stone Cottage and featured a filtered water system and a diving board. Red pine, most likely transplanted from FDR's forest plantations, screened the pool from the approach along Val-Kill Lane. (NPS, The Swimming Pool, https://www.nps.gov/places/the-swimming-pool.htm; CLR 2005: 51)

In 1936, Val-Kill Industries closed after a ten-year run due to economic and personal reasons, leading to a series of changes to the Val-Kill landscape over the next few years. Eleanor Roosevelt converted the Factory into her own cottage, leaving Stone Cottage as Nancy's and Marion's home. The conversion, as completed in 1937, included construction of a connection between two, two-story factory buildings, and the creation of an apartment that became the home of Mrs. Roosevelt's personal secretary, Malvina Thompson. While the stucco exterior of the Factory was domesticated with shutters and trellises, Mrs. Roosevelt left the surrounding grounds as informal (Figure 6). As Mrs. Roosevelt was renovating her cottage, Nancy and Marion expanded Stone Cottage with the addition of a dormer, and on the east (rear) side of the building, a living room wing that opened onto a formal brick wall-enclosed garden with a fireplace and loggia. To the rear (east) of the walled garden, Nancy Cook created another, larger garden room defined by shrub and flower borders and a stockage fence that extended along the south side of the walled garden (Figure 7). Around the same time in 1936, Nancy Cook added a bluestone patio along the south side of Stone Cottage adjacent to the swimming pool and covered it with a yellow awning that sheltered wrought-iron furniture and flowerpots (Figure 8). Nancy Cook's extensive gardens around Stone Cottage contrasted with the simple lawn and shrubs around Mrs. Roosevelt's cottage (Figure 9). (CLR 2005: 52-53)

In 1937, FDR extended Val-Kill Lane east across Dutchess Hill to his newly-acquired Rohan Farm. This road would become the main route to Top Cottage, FDR's own retreat completed two years later in 1939. South of this road, FDR laid out a loop road in 1940 that extended through the woods of the Tompkins Farm and led to a remote pond where FDR liked to stop to enjoy the peace and quiet during the war years. Several other changes were made to the Val-Kill landscape during this time, including addition of a small greenhouse and a hedge-enclosed cutting garden behind Mrs. Roosevelt's cottage in 1939. That same year, Eleanor had an unpainted concrete-block multi-bay garage and stable built along Cross Road (back entrance road) so she could keep her horses there instead of at Springwood. The wetlands along the Fall Kill north of the pond were dredged to create an upper pond visible from Mrs. Roosevelt's cottage, with FDR's 1914 white pine plantation framing the distance. The lower pond in front of Stone Cottage, an extension of the more formal grounds maintained by Nancy Cook and Marion Dickerman, featured mown lawn that extended down to the

water's edge with willows on the banks and a flagpole near the shore added in 1940 (Figure 10). A swing set and see-saw was also added near the shoreline at a time for use by the Roosevelt grandchildren and other young visitors. (CLR 2005: 56-57)

By the late 1930s, with Mrs. Roosevelt's role as First Lady becoming more demanding and as her family made greater use of Val-Kill for entertaining and recreation, her relationship with Nancy Cook and Marion Dickerman soured. The shared use of the landscape with the Roosevelt family, especially around the swimming pool, became a point of conflict. Nancy and Marion had cherished the peace and quiet of Val-Kill, and Nancy was protective of her gardens around Stone Cottage. (CLR 2005: 107)

Val-Kill Farms and Subdivision of the Roosevelt Estate:
FDR's death on April 14, 1945, began a period of major changes for the Roosevelt Estate, including Val-Kill. FDR left a 33-acre tract around the Home at Springwood to the American people as a national historic site. The remainder of the Roosevelt Estate lands, except for the 16-acre FDR Library established in 1939 and 205 acres of the J.R. Roosevelt Place that remained the life estate of FDR's niece, Helen Roosevelt Robinson, were transferred to the trustees of FDR's legal estate, who interpreted FDR's will as requiring the land be sold to the highest bidder. (Roosevelt Estate HRS 2011: 284–286)

On April 1, 1946, the estate trustees reached an agreement with Mrs. Roosevelt for a one-year lease of all estate lands, providing for an option for her to buy at not less than the appraised value. By this time, she had made her cottage at Val-Kill, the former Val-Kill Industries factory she had converted to residential use in 1936-1937, her permanent home, and her son Elliott Roosevelt had moved into Top Cottage. Within a year, Mrs. Roosevelt was partnering with Elliott on plans for a major agricultural enterprise known as Val-Kill Farms, which fulfilled her interest in keeping the land productive. With Elliott as the farm manager, they planned a livestock and Christmas tree operation. Together, they decided to purchase FDR's upland farms (land east of the Maritje Kill between the Post Road and Violet Avenue) that included Val-Kill and Top Cottage, amounting to 847.20 acres. Eleanor Roosevelt purchased this property on August 15, 1947, becoming the first time that she owned Val-Kill outright, but within a month she transferred the title to Elliott while retaining an informal life tenancy at the cottages. Just prior to Mrs. Roosevelt's purchase of the property, Nancy Cook and Marion Dickerman decided that the Roosevelt family presence had become overpowering, and they sold her their interest in the Val-Kill buildings and improvements per the lease they executed with FDR in 1926. In the summer of 1947, they moved out of Stone Cottage to a new home in New Canaan, Connecticut. Upon their departure, they removed shrubs, perennials, and fencing from around Stone Cottage, partly dismantling Nancy's gardens that wrapped around the south and east sides of the house. (HRS 2011: 283-285; CLR 2005: 41)

Elliott Roosevelt's interest in Val-Kill Farms did not last long, and by the late 1940s he began to sell off its assets and real estate, at a time when real estate development offered the prospect of quicker and larger profits. At the time, the rural towns around the City of Poughkeepsie were experiencing a suburban real estate boom spurred by government incentives and the growth of IBM factories, including a major expansion south of the city in 1948 and another in 1952 at which Eleanor Roosevelt spoke at the dedication. Elliott, whose relationship with his mother and brother John became strained during this time, first sold off the Val-Kill Tea Room (former weaving shop) on NY 9G in May 1949, and within a year, Val-Kill Farms was out of business. Between 1950 and 1952, he sold off his Roosevelt estate holdings, including his home at Top Cottage. John and Anne Roosevelt moved to Stone Cottage in 1951 and assumed the role of caretakers for Val-Kill. Elliott sold half of his interest in Val-Kill, consisting of a 179-acre tract on the Bennett and Tompkins farms (current park boundaries), to John in 1952; he sold the remaining half to John's wife Anne in 1960. Elliott sold the other estate tracts to developers, who laid out suburban residential subdivisions that surrounded the 179-acre Val-Kill tract: the 54-unit Patrick subdivision to the north on the Dumphy Farm, the 40-unit Lyons subdivision to the south on the Tompkins Farm, and the 300-unit Harbourd Hills subdivision to the north and east on portions of FDR's Dumphy, Hughson, and Bennett Farms (Figure 11). Harbourd Hills severed the connection between Val-Kill and Top Cottage. To service expanding residential development in the region, the local power utility, Central Hudson, built a high-tension electrical transmission line in ca.1955 across the 179-acre Val-Kill property, then owned by Elliott and

John Roosevelt. (CLR 2005: 111; HRS 2011: 295)

Val-Kill as Eleanor Roosevelt's Home:
During the years after 1947 when Val-Kill became Eleanor Roosevelt's primary home, the landscape of the core domestic grounds retained its overall organization with no major new additions, but the character around Stone Cottage changed markedly following the departure of Nancy Cook and Marion Dickerman in summer 1947. In 1950, John Roosevelt moved with his wife and four young children from California to Val-Kill, where they made Stone Cottage their permanent home. (Nina Roosevelt: Growing Up Roosevelt: A Granddaughter's Memoir or Eleanor Roosevelt, 2023) The outer garden areas that Nancy Cook created south and east of the Stone Cottage walled garden disappeared, as did the overall manicured character of the grounds. Through the 1950s, Mrs. Roosevelt and her son John maintained the grounds with an overall informal character, similar to the character around Mrs. Roosevelt's cottage. The swimming pool and Stone Cottage patio remained a center of gatherings at Val-Kill, but instead of wrought-iron patio furniture, flowerpots, and neatly trimmed flower borders, the landscape was characterized by informal borders planted with marigolds, wood picnic tables, aluminum-strap folding chairs, and wire-picket fences (Figure 12). A paved tennis court with wire-fence backstops was built in 1950 on the lawn south of Mrs. Roosevelt's cottage, not far from the stone barbecue built in 1933 and the grandchildren's playhouse that had been moved from Springwood in 1945. Mrs. Roosevelt cared for the grounds and planted bulbs, annuals, and flowering shrubs through the 1950s. She also maintained the cutting garden east of her cottage, although more as a vegetable garden and not with the same rigor as Nancy had. (CLR 2005: 112)

In the surrounding landscape, Val-Kill Pond remained a focal point, but its banks became more naturalized, rather than mown to the water's edge as it had been during Nancy and Marion's tenure (Figure 13). The family also kept the outlying land in agricultural use, which preserved open space and views. Most of the surrounding suburban development was screened by trees, except for the Patrick subdivision north of the fields. The Roosevelts hired Charles Curnan as the caretaker, who lived with his family in the 19th-century Bennett tenant house along Val-Kill Lane. He kept livestock in enclosures near this house, raised crops in the field south of Val-Kill Lane, maintained the orchard on the Tompkins Farm planted in the 1930s, and together with John Roosevelt, raised sheep in the pastures north of Val-Kill Lane. In 1953, John purchased Lot #1 of the Harbourd Hills subdivision to preserve access to Val-Kill along the back entrance road where it joined Roosevelt Road, the main road through the development. The development cut off the road to Top Cottage, although Mrs. Roosevelt still used the western part to access FDR's loop road through the woods of the Tompkins Farm that was one of her favorite trails. Another trail went through FDR's 1914 white pine plantation north of Mrs. Roosevelt's cottage. (CLR 2005: 112,114)

Through the 1950s and early 1960s, Mrs. Roosevelt used the informal setting of Val-Kill as a place to gather family, friends, school and social groups, politicians, and dignitaries in support of her humanitarian values. She encouraged visitors to use the pool, tennis court, boat, trails, play equipment, and trails. Notable visitors included Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev, Democratic presidential candidate John F. Kennedy, directors of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), participants in Encampment for Citizenship workshops, and boys from the Wiltwyck School, a nearby interracial reform school that Mrs. Roosevelt had supported since its founding in 1936 (Figure 14). (NPS, "Eleanor Roosevelt Cultural Landscape," https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/val-kill-650024.htm#4/34.45/-98.53)

As Mrs. Roosevelt entered her late 70s by the close of the 1950s, she could not devote as much energy to the Val-Kill grounds as she once had. John Roosevelt made several changes once he and his wife Anne assumed full ownership of the property in 1960, which corresponded with the time Mrs. Roosevelt began to experience severe weakness and fatigue that were diagnosed as symptoms of anemia. During this time, John added a rectangular fenced rose garden near the tennis court, purportedly so his mother could see flowers from her sleeping porch. By 1961, he took down the frame loggia in the walled garden at the rear of Stone Cottage and replaced it with a concrete-block wall and a frame laundry room addition, presumably in anticipation of tenant use of the cottages. Eleanor Roosevelt's health continued to decline and by April 1962, her anemia had worsened. By September she was hospitalized and on October 18 she discharged herself to return to her

Manhattan apartment, where she died on November 7. (CLR 2005: 113; PBS, 7 November 2020, https://www.pbs.org/newshour/health/how-a-mysterious-ailment-ended-eleanor-roosevelts-life)

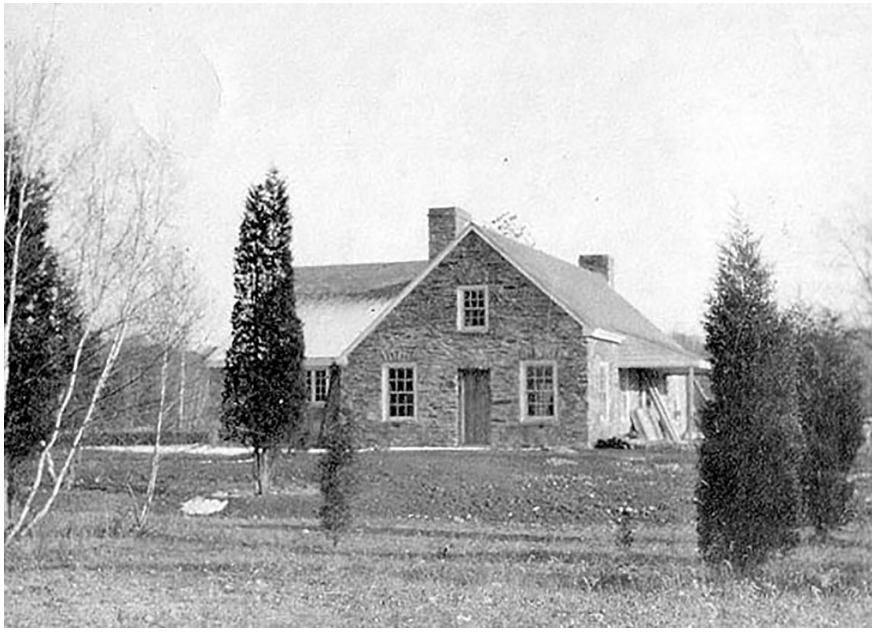


Figure 4. Stone Cottage nearing completion, looking southeast with old-field red-cedars and grey birch in the foreground, ca.1926. (Cook-Dickerman Collection, 779, Roosevelt-Vanderbilt NHS archives [hereafter, "ROVA archives")



Figure 5. Distant view of the Factory to the right behind Stone Cottage and scattered red-cedar trees, looking northeast with the original creek-fed swimming pool in the foreground, ca.1927. (Cook-Dickerman Collection, 822, ROVA archives)



Figure 6. Eleanor Roosevelt and Nancy Cook with Val-Kill furniture outside of the converted Factory, ca.1937. (Cook-Dickerman Collection, unnumbered photograph, ROVA archives)



Figure 7. Nancy Cook's fence-enclosed outer garden that wrapped around the south and west sides of the walled garden, looking west toward the south entrance to Stone Cottage, 1940. (Cook-Dickerman Collection, 829, ROVA archives)



Figure 8. The awning-covered Stone Cottage patio, flower pots and gardens around Stone Cottage, and views across the pond and farm fields toward Violet Avenue (NY 9G), ca.1940. (Cook-Dickerman Color Collection, 31460076, ROVA archives)



Figure 9. The informal landscape around Mrs. Roosevelt's Val-Kill Cottage, looking east across the badminton net, ca.1945. (Cook-Dickerman Color Collection, 31460013, ROVA archives)



Figure 10. The lower Val-Kill pond showing mown lawn extending to the water's edge, willows along the banks, and the flagpole installed in 1940, looking north, ca.1940. In the distance at image right is the stone barbecue built in 1933. (Cook-Dickerman Color Collection, 31460059, ROVA archives)



Figure 11. Aerial showing residential subdivisions begun in the early 1950s and the power line corridor built in ca. 1955, photographed 1960. The red line indicates the current boundaries of the 180-acre Val-Kill property, which correspond with the property Elliot Roosevelt did not sell off, except for a lot in the Harbourd Hills subdivision. (Aerial photograph ERC-5V-85, ROVA archives, annotated by SUNY ESF)



Figure 12. Gathering near the swimming pool with the Stone Cottage patio at left, looking east showing casual character of the landscape, ca.1958. (Photograph 04-24[2019], Dr. A. David Gurewitsch collection, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library)



Figure 13. Late fall view of Mrs. Roosevelt's Val-Kill Cottage and the grounds around the stone barbecue looking east across lower Val-Kill Pond, ca.1950. (Photograph 917 15, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library)



Figure 14. Boys from the Wiltwyck School, an inter-racial school for at-risk youth, enjoying a picnic at Val-Kill, looking west across the lower pond, 1952. (Photograph NPX 64 171, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library)

VAL-KILL AFTER ELEANOR ROOSEVELT'S LIFETIME, 1962–2025

After Eleanor Roosevelt's death, John converted his mother's cottage and the Playhouse into apartments, and in 1964, sold a 2.97-acre tract north of Val-Kill Lane, to Charles Curnan, the Val-Kill caretaker. Curnan built a house on this property to replace the 19th-century Bennett tenant house along Val-Kill Lane that had been destroyed by fire. In 1965, John and Anne Roosevelt divorced, and they left Stone Cottage, ending Roosevelt family residency at Val-Kill. John converted the house into apartments and around this time built a new access road through the site of the cutting garden. Charles Curnan continued to maintain the property into the late 1960s, and overall, it changed little. In 1970, after eight years of renting out Val-Kill, John and Anne Roosevelt ended Charles Curnan's employment, reacquired his 2.97-acre tract, and put the 179-acre Val-Kill property on the market. They sold Val-Kill on December 16, 1970, to developers Rosario G. Dolce and William Squires who planned to build a retirement community on the site. Without Charles Curnan's maintenance of the landscape, conditions deteriorated, agricultural use most likely ceased, and woods grew up on the pastures north of Val-Kill Lane. Farming had also ceased on the Bennett Farm west of NY 9G, where farm buildings stood forlorn as owner William Kay sought unsuccessfully to build on the property. In 1974, the Bennet farmhouse and barn were demolished, and during this time the surrounding fields grew up in woods. (HRS 2011: 347-348)

As Dolce and Squires sought approvals for their planned redevelopment of Val-Kill through the 1970s, they continued to rent out some of the buildings, but allowed conditions to deteriorate (Figure 15). In 1972, their proposal to develop a retirement community was turned down by the Town of Hyde Park. Two years later, they submitted a second proposal to rezone the property to build a nursing home and single-family houses, but the town again turned down their application. Around the same time, grassroots efforts got underway to have Val-Kill incorporated into the National Park System. In 1975, members of the Hyde Park Visual Environment Committee, the director of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Curtis Roosevelt and Eleanor Roosevelt Seagraves (grandchildren), and the actress Jean Stapleton, among others, formed a coalition to preserve Val-Kill and designate it as a memorial to Eleanor Roosevelt. This effort led to the formation of Eleanor Roosevelt's Val-Kill, Inc. (ERVK), chartered to perpetuate values championed by the First Lady of the World and advocate for saving Val-Kill. On May 26, 1977, Congress passed legislation establishing the Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site, the first dedicated to a First Lady. The legislation allowed for land acquisition and conservation of the site, and called for the park to undertake studies, lectures,

seminars, and other endeavors to perpetuate Eleanor Roosevelt's humanitarian values. Dolce and Squires were unwilling to sell the property, so the federal government took it by eminent domain. Although established as its own unit of the National Park System, the park was administered as part of the Roosevelt-Vanderbilt National Historic Sites. The park entered into a cooperative agreement with ERVK to undertake the educational programming called for in the legislation. In 1979, the park acquired Harbourd Hills Lot #1 from John Roosevelt to secure park access from Roosevelt Road. (CLR 2005: 145-146; HRS 2011: 347)

Between 1980 and 1984, the National Park Service stabilized, restored, and adaptively reused buildings and other structures in the core area, while it took down several farm outbuildings located west of the Fall Kill associated with former caretaker Charles Curnan. Stone Cottage was adapted as offices and meeting rooms for ERVK, a portion of the kitchen and the garage at Mrs. Roosevelt's Val-Kill Cottage were adapted as public restrooms and a bookstore, and a visitor contact station was inserted into the Playhouse. The park service rehabilitated the landscape of the core area, including relaying of historic bluestone paving on the walks between the cottages, regrading of the earthen roads, addition of lighting, and return of some of the gardens and plantings that existed during Mrs. Roosevelt's lifetime. These included the screen of red pines south of the pool, the cutting garden, and John Roosevelt's rose garden. However, many of the features that reflected the once lively character of the landscape, notably the play equipment, tennis court, swimming pool, and Stone Cottage patio, were shuttered or left as remnants. In 1984, after significant repair and restoration, Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site opened to the public. After unsuccessfully experimenting with a visitor shuttle system from Springwood, the park built a visitor parking lot in the east half of the orchard in 1985. Another lot for staff was built in the woods east of the Stable-Garage off the rear entry road. (CLR 2005: 148–149)

Changes to the Val-Kill landscape were few through the 1990s and were characterized largely by natural growth and decline, notably the expansion of successional woods and wetlands on former fields and along the Fall-Kill at the site of the Val-Kill ponds. The changes included loss of open water on the upper pond and substantial constriction and growth of reeds around the lower pond. he 2000s saw new studies and planning efforts that would support restoration and rehabilitation efforts at Val-Kill, strengthen the capacity of ERVK, and better connect the site to Springwood and Top Cottage. The studies and plans included a cultural landscape report completed in 2005 (Part I) and 2013 (Part II), a historic resources study of the Roosevelt Estate completed in 2011, and a new General Management Plan completed in 2010. More recent planning studies include Historic Resource Studies that evaluate Val-Kill within LGBTQ contexts (2023), and the Roosevelts and Black Civil Rights Leaders (2023). As these efforts were underway, the park also benefited from land conservation efforts by the Beaverkill Conservancy and Scenic Hudson, most notably the park's acquisition of the estate lands that extended to the Post Road in 2007. This allowed the park to reestablish a connection between Springwood and Val-Kill along Roosevelt Farm Lane that was part of the Hyde Park Trail that extended to Top Cottage. Reestablishing this connection to Top Cottage was made possible by acquisition of a small parcel of land outside of the estate boundaries in 1998; the trail was opened in 2007. (HRS 2011: 346-348; Review comment, Futral, 8 November 2024)

The only new built addition to the Val-Kill landscape since its opening occurred in 2008 when the National Park Service completed a new conference center and office building for ERVK, now known as the Eleanor Roosevelt Center at Val-Kill, on the site of the 1964 Curnan house north of Val-Kill Lane. The project included a new parking lot and allowed ERVK to vacate Stone Cottage, which the park then adapted for interpretive exhibits. During the 2010s, the park undertook several restoration and reconstruction projects in the landscape surrounding the cottages. This included removal of John Roosevelt's concrete block wall and laundry addition for reconstruction of the loggia at the Stone Cottage walled garden in 2011; replanting of the failing red pine screen south of the pool with more resilient Eastern red-cedar in 2013; and in 2017 uncovering the swimming pool by replacing the wood cover with a mesh floor that decreased the useable depth to a safe level. This project, funded in part by the park's philanthropic partner, The Eleanor Roosevelt Val-Kill Partnership, also included reestablishing surrounding plantings and furnishing the Stone Cottage patio with tables and chairs to enhance its historic character and encourage visitor use. The park in recent years has also replanted missing specimen trees, rehabilitated the tennis court and cutting garden, and has plans to restore the play equipment. There is also a completed but unpublished Administrative History which outlines

the park's development in greater detail. (CLR 2013: 84–85; NPS, https://www.nps.gov/places/the-swimming-pool.htm; Review comment, Futral, 8 November 2024)

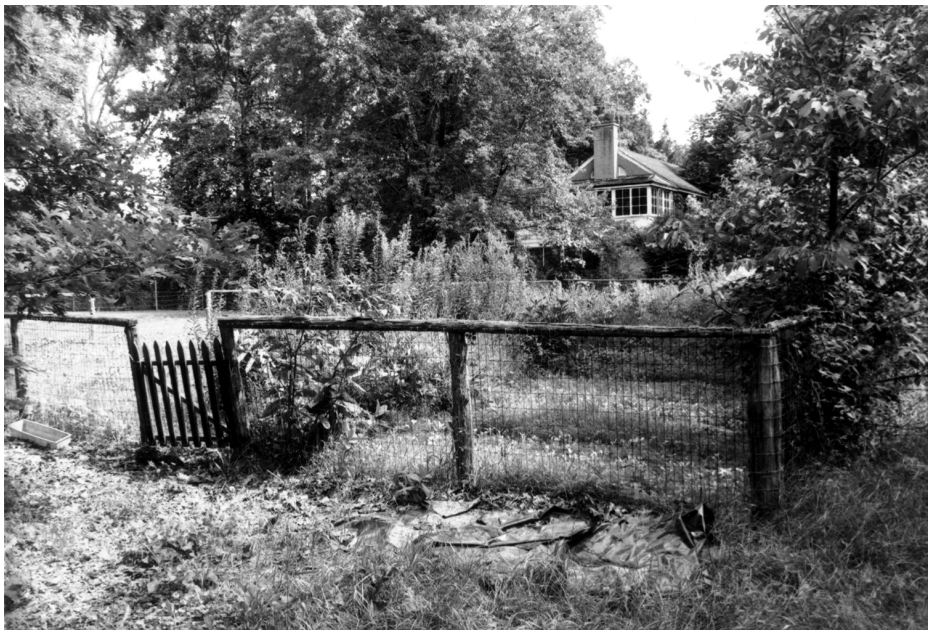


Figure 15. Deteriorated condition of Val-Kill, looking east toward Mrs. Roosevelt's Val-Kill Cottage with John Roosevelt's rose garden in the foreground, 1978. (Eleanor Roosevelt NHS files, NPS Denver Technical Information Center)

Uses

Functions and Uses:

Major Category	Category	Use/Function	Historic	Current	Primary
Domestic (Residential)	Single Family Dwelling	Single Family House	Yes	No	Yes
Education	Interpretive Landscape	Interpretive Landscape	No	Yes	Yes
Agriculture/Subsistence	Agricultural Field	Agricultural Field	Yes	Yes	No
Landscape	Road-Related	Automobile	Yes	Yes	No
Landscape	Natural Area	Body of Water (Lake, Pond)	Yes	Yes	No
Industrial/Processing/Extraction	Dam	Dam - Concrete (Gravity)	Yes	Yes	No
Agriculture/Subsistence	Farm (Plantation)	Farm (Plantation)	Yes	No	No
Landscape	Natural Area	Forest	Yes	Yes	No
Landscape	Pedestrian-Related	Hiking Trail	Yes	Yes	No
Recreation/Culture	Museum (Exhibition Hall)	Historic Furnished Interior	No	Yes	No
Government	Government Office	Interpretation Facility	No	Yes	No
Industrial/Processing/Extraction	Manufacturing Facility (Mill)	Manufacturing Facility (Mill) - Other	Yes	No	No
Landscape	Road-Related	Parking Area	No	Yes	No
Recreation/Culture	Outdoor Recreation	Picnic Shelter	Yes	No	No
Recreation/Culture	Outdoor Recreation	Playground	Yes	No	No
Landscape	Road-Related	Road Bridge	Yes	Yes	No
Landscape	Scientific Landscape	Scientific Landscape-Other	Yes	No	No
Domestic (Residential)	Secondary Structure (Garage)	Secondary Structure (Garage)	Yes	No	No
Domestic (Residential)	Small Residential Landscape	Small Residential Landscape	Yes	Yes	No
Recreation/Culture	Sports Facility	Swimming Pool	Yes	No	No
Recreation/Culture	Sports Facility	Tennis Court	Yes	No	No
Education	Training Center	Training Center	No	Yes	No
Landscape	Natural Area	Wetland	Yes	Yes	No
Agriculture/Subsistence	Woodlot/Forest (Managed)	Woodlot/Forest (Managed)	Yes	Yes	No

Public Access:

Public Access: Unrestricted

Public Access Narrative:

Park and Val-Kill Cottage tours vary by season. The grounds of Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site, including the Hyde Park Trail that leads to Top Cottage, are open daily except for New Year's, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. The main motor vehicle entrance is from NY 9G. Public parking is available in two lots.

Associated Ethnographic Group

Ethnographic Study Status: No Survey Conducted

Ethnographic Narrative:

According to David Goldstein, Lead of NPS Region 1 Tribal and Cultural Affairs, no Ethnographic Study has been completed for Eleanor Roosevelt NHS, although one is planned to begin in the immediate future for the adjacent Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt NHS. As discussed in the Physical History and Analysis chapters, the east side of the Hudson Valley extending to the Connecticut River, was once home to the Wappinger, an Eastern Algonquian Munsee-speaking people, and their ancestors.

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

The historic integrity of the Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site landscape is evaluated by comparing landscape characteristics and features present by the end of the period of significance, 1924–1962, with the existing conditions as assessed in 2023. Many landscape characteristics and features from the period of significance remain today, including natural systems, overall spatial organization, buildings and structures, circulation, and managed vegetation. Since Mrs. Roosevelt's death in 1962, some landscape characteristics and features at Val-Kill have changed, most notably constructed water features (Val-Kill ponds), loss of open space through natural succession, and alterations of some views. The surrounding residential subdivisions, although not fully built out until the 1970s, were begun during Mrs. Roosevelt's lifetime.

INTEGRITY

The National Register of Historic Places defines integrity as the ability of a property to convey its significance through physical resources. The National Register program identifies seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Retention of these qualities is necessary for a property to convey its significance; however, not all seven aspects must be present to retain integrity. The following evaluation is based on the documented 1924–1962 period of significance for Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site. Overall, Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site retains integrity of location, design setting, materials, workmanship, and association. The feeling of the site has been diminished due to conversion to public use.

Location:
Location is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred. Val-Kill retains all property historically associated with Roosevelt family ownership of the site after subdivision of adjacent Roosevelt Estate lands in the early 1950s, including the main 179.77-acre tract and the 0.73-acre tract in the Harbourd Hills subdivision at the end of the rear entrance drive.

Design:
Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. Val-Kill retains the overall design of the landscape characterized by a rural/agricultural western half, a wooded eastern half, and the domestic designed landscape at the center. Within this domestic core, the landscape retains the design that developed in large part between 1924 and 1936 and historically altered following the departure of Nancy Cook and Marion Dickerman, which led to loss of defined garden areas around Stone Cottage and overall, a more informal character. Reconstruction of the walled garden loggia reflects the return of a long-standing design feature that disappeared at the very end of the historic period. Views from Stone Cottage and Val-Kill Cottage (Mrs. Roosevelt's cottage) across open water of the Val-Kill ponds was a defining design element but has been diminished due to natural old-field succession and conversion of open water to swamp. Overall, the Val-Kill landscape retains its historically informal design that was a reflection of Mrs. Roosevelt's own character.

Setting:
Setting is the physical environment of a historic property. The Val-Kill landscape retains its overall setting as it had evolved through the historic period into the early 1960s, including forested land, wetlands, a state highway, a power transmission corridor, and suburban residential subdivisions. Since 1962, the setting has changed through the loss of the Bennett farmstead and growth of woods on farm fields west of NY 9G, along with the more recent conversion of these lands to public trail use. The setting also changed through the loss/substantial alteration of the former Val-Kill Tea Room at the intersection of Creek Road and NY 9G. Overall, the historic setting of Val-Kill remains, but has become more wooded and less open.

Materials:
Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property. The Val-Kill landscape retains its historic hardwoods forest, plantation trees, mown turf and many specimen trees within the core, the waters of the Fall Kill, the earth/gravel surface of the drives, bluestone on the walks and patio, steel pipes on the play equipment

and tennis court backstops, and the stone, painted wood, asphalt shingles, concrete, and concrete block on buildings and structures. Changes in materials since 1962 have included introduction of bronzed metal for signs and light standards, plastic mesh for deer fencing, and black and chip-seal asphalt on the visitor parking lot and Val-Kill Lane. Some plant materials have been lost since 1963 and replaced with different species, and some of the plantations have naturalized. The ERVK conference center completed in 2008 was built with materials similar to Stone Cottage but is not visible to most park visitors. Overall, the Val-Kill landscape retains integrity of materials; materials introduced since 1962 are overall compatible with the historic character of the landscape.

Workmanship:
Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory. Val-Kill retains integrity of workmanship evidenced in the construction of Val-Kill Cottage, Stone Cottage, the stone barbecue, and the other historic buildings and structures on the site. Built workmanship that deteriorated after the historic period has largely been reproduced in-kind. Integrity of workmanship related to gardening on the site was lost after Mrs. Roosevelt's death in 1962 but has been reintroduced in part. Overall, the built workmanship that existed by 1962 remains intact.

Feeling:
Feeling is the property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. While Val-Kill still has most of the tangible attributes that existed during Mrs. Roosevelt's later years through the 1950s, the historic feeling conveyed by intangible aspects of a domestic landscape defined by Mrs. Roosevelt's presence, and by gatherings of family, friends, school and social groups, politicians, and dignitaries has been lost through the landscape's transition to a public historic site. While ERVK, the Val-Kill Partnership, and the park undertake programming that continues Mrs. Roosevelt's humanitarian values, the feeling of Val-Kill as a private country home has been diminished through the addition of necessary park features such as lighting, interpretive waysides, signs, and parking lots. Recent rehabilitation projects, including the reintroduction of open water in the swimming pool and furniture on the pool patio, have helped to evoke the historic feeling of the landscape.

Association:
Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. Val-Kill retains its historic association with Eleanor Roosevelt, who in her later years made it her permanent home. No changes to the landscape since her death in 1962 have diminished this association. The historic association of the landscape has also been perpetuated by the name of the site and the ongoing programming undertaken by the park and its partners to continue the humanitarian values that Mrs. Roosevelt championed.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES

The next section presents an analysis of landscape characteristics and their associated features and corresponding List of Classified Structures names and numbers, if applicable. It also includes an evaluation of whether the feature contributes to the property's National Register eligibility for the historic period (1924–1962), contributes to the property's historic character, or if it is noncontributing, undetermined, or managed as a cultural resource. If a feature is non-contributing, it is evaluated as "compatible" (visually congruent with the historic character of the landscape) or "incompatible" (visually incongruent with the historic character of the landscape). All historic conditions text is based on the Cultural Landscape Report Part I (2005) and Part II (2013), and the Roosevelt Estate Historic Resource Study (2011), except where noted.

Landscape Characteristic: **Natural Systems and Features**

Historic Condition (to 1962):
Natural systems and features are the natural aspects that have influenced the development and physical form of the landscape, and can include geology, geomorphology, hydrology, ecology, climate, and native unmanaged vegetation. Val-Kill's natural setting was shaped by a mostly level terrace to the west, lowlands along the Fall Kill in the middle, and uplands at the foot of Dutchess Hill to the east. Most of the native hardwoods forest was cleared for agriculture beginning in the 18th century. The rougher, hiller land to the east was abandoned for agricultural use in the 19th century and had regenerated in native hardwoods forest by the early 20th century. The marginal farmland near the Fall Kill was abandoned later and was undergoing natural old-field succession by the time that the Roosevelts began to picnic there in the early 1920s. This old-field succession was dominated by Eastern red-cedar, gray birch, red maple, and sycamore. The Fall Kill, Dutch for valley stream and namesake of Val-Kill, was a prime reason the Roosevelts chose its banks as the location for their retreat. They dredged and dammed the Fall Kill to create Val-Kill Pond and FDR managed the hardwoods forest for timber production and other purposes. The forest featured a number of small natural ponds. A pond at the southern extent of the Loop Road through the Tompkins Farm was one of FDR's favorite places to escape the pressures of his presidency during World War II. After his death in 1945, management of the forest ceased, and portions between Val-Kill and Top Cottage were cleared for residential development.

Evaluation:
The hardwoods forest and the Fall Kill along with their associated ecosystems were important characteristics of Val-Kill to Mrs. Roosevelt and remain largely consistent with conditions from the late historic period. Substantial changes in natural systems and features since 1962 include the expansion of wetland vegetation due to siltation in Val-Kill Pond (see Constructed Water Features), and growth of deciduous woods on former pastures north of Val-Kill Lane due to natural succession that followed the end of agricultural use. Another area of successional woods, including a mix of hardwoods, grew up after 1962 on open ground south of the Stable-Garage that Mrs. Roosevelt most likely used as a paddock for her horses.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Fall Kill	207873	Contributing					No
Fall Kill Wetlands	207874	Contributing			Asset	1422838	No
Loop Road Pond	207875	Contributing					No
South Field Boundary Woods	207876	Contributing					No
South Field Wetland Hollow	207877	Contributing					No
Val-Kill Forest	207878	Contributing					No
North Field Successional Woods	207879	Noncontributing – Incompatible					No
Paddock Site Woods	207880	Noncontributing – Incompatible					No

Landscape Characteristic: Spatial Organization

Historic Condition (to 1962):
Spatial organization is the three-dimensional organization of physical forms and visual associations in a landscape, including the articulation of ground, vertical, and overhead planes that define and create spaces. The overall spatial organization of the Val-Kill landscape during Mrs. Roosevelt's lifetime consisted of open agricultural fields on the western half of the property, enclosed forest on the eastern half, and the open waters of Val-Kill Pond in the center. A utilitarian yard surrounded the Bennett tenant farmhouse north of Val-Kill Lane. A field south of Val-Kill lane, defined by a stone wall on the north and woods on the other sides, was created for an orchard in 1931.

The domestic core of the landscape surrounding the cottages was adjacent to the pond and consisted of areas that had loosely-defined limits, and others that featured clearly defined limits. These included the shaded picnic grounds on the peninsula, an informal landscape of lawn and trees that originated in the Roosevelts' earliest recreational use of the site. This area was defined by Val-Kill Pond to the east and north, Val-Kill Cottage to the east, and Stone Cottage to the south. Within this larger area was a small lawn space defined by hedges of spirea at the west front of Val-Kill Cottage, where Mrs. Roosevelt set out lawn furniture, and a fenced rose garden to the south created by John Roosevelt around 1960. On the east side of Val-Kill Cottage, as renovated in 1937 for Mrs. Roosevelt's home, was an informal courtyard at the main entrance formed by the wings of the building and terminus of Val-Kill Lane, and at the back of the service wing was a small patio for the caretakers. Around Stone Cottage, landscape spaces included the largely open west or front lawn of mown turf that extended down to the edge of Val-Kill Pond. Between 1935 and 1937, several defined spaces were created around Stone Cottage: the pool terrace and pool patio to the south, the brick-wall enclosed walled garden to the east, and east of the walled garden another garden enclosed by borders and a stockade fence. This latter garden space was removed when Nancy Cook and Marion Dickerman left in 1947. Another space created by Nancy Cook in the 1930s was a naturalistic garden with rock outcropping, trees, flowering shrubs, and spring bulbs on the southwest bank of Val-Kill Pond. East of the cottages was the hedge-enclosed cutting garden created in 1937. A fenced area used as a horse paddock may have been created to the south of the cutting garden when the Stable-Garage was built in 1937. In ca.1955, a linear space was created when the Central Hudson Gas & Electric Company cleared a corridor through the Val-Kill property for a power transmission line.

Evaluation:
The spatial organization of the Val-Kill landscape remains substantially intact since Mrs. Roosevelt's death in 1962. Major changes are largely confined to the field north of Val-Kill Lane, where the cessation of agricultural use has led to approximately two-thirds of the field converting to woods, and the loss of open fields west of Violet Avenue/NY 9G that formed a spatial extension of both the north and south fields. The yard around the Bennett tenant house changed with the loss of that building in 1963, but remains an open space defined by a row of cedars. This house was replaced with a new caretaker's house to the north in 1962; this area changed again with construction of the ERVK conference center and parking lot in 2007. Loss of open water on Val-Kill Pond has also changed the spatial character of the landscape, and in particular created more enclosure to the peninsula area (picnic grounds). Other spatial changes since 1962 include growth of woods south of the cutting garden, on what had been open space that was most likely a horse paddock, and addition of the visitor parking area in the eastern half of the orchard field. The park has recently rejuvenated shrubs and plantings to enhance the historic spatial enclosure of the swimming pool terrace and the west lawn of Val-Kill Cottage. The open space of the south field is maintained through use as a hay field (Figure 16).

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Tenant House Site Yard	207881	Contributing					No
Caretaker's Wing Yard	207882	Contributing					No
Cutting Garden	207883	Contributing			Asset	1422783	Yes
North Field	207884	Contributing			Asset	1422875	No
Orchard Field	207885	Contributing					No
Peninsula Area (Picnic Grounds)	207886	Contributing					No
Rose Garden (Fenced Garden)	207887	Contributing			Asset	1476893	No
South Field	207888	Contributing			Asset	1422875	No
Southwest Bank of Pond	207889	Contributing					No
Stone Cottage West Lawn Area	207890	Contributing					No
Val-Kill Cottage West Lawn Area	207891	Contributing					No
Walled Garden	207892	Contributing					No
Central Hudson Power Line Corridor Clearing	207893	Noncontributing – Compatible					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 16. The south field, a spatial feature that predates the founding of Val-Kill in 1924, looking east from Val-Kill Lane, 2023. The wide mown shoulder is used as part of the Hyde Park Trail (land use feature). (SUNY ESF)

Landscape Characteristic: Land Use

Historic Condition (to 1962):
Land uses are the principal activities in a landscape that form, shape, and organize the landscape as a result of human interaction. The primary uses of the Val-Kill landscape during Mrs. Roosevelt's lifetime were residential, recreational, and industrial within the core of the site surrounding the cottages. These uses traced back to the early 1920s when the Roosevelt family first picnicked along the banks of the Fall Kill, a decade after FDR purchased the Bennett Farm in 1911. The fields to the west of the core were used for tenant agriculture, continuing uses that traced back on the site to the late 18th century, and FDR used old fields and the native hardwoods forest to the east for his forestry work beginning in 1914. Residential uses were introduced in 1926 with FDR's lease for an eight-acre site with his wife, and friends Nancy Cook and Marion Dickerman, and the completion of Stone Cottage. The women's interest in political and social issues led to the founding of Val-Kill Industries in 1926, which introduced furniture, metalwork, and textile industries that the women envisioned as a model of supplemental work in the struggling rural economy, while also reviving traditional American crafts. Personal and economic issues related to the Great Depression brought an end to Val-Kill Industries in 1936, at which time Mrs. Roosevelt converted the Factory into her own residence, while Nancy and Marion made Stone Cottage their own home. Strains in the friendship, FDR's death in 1945 and subsequent sale of the estate lands, and Mrs. Roosevelt's decision to make Val-Kill her permanent home led Nancy and Marion to leave Val-Kill in 1947. For a brief period between 1947 and ca.1950, Mrs. Roosevelt partnered with her son Elliott to continue agricultural and forestry at Val-Kill and surrounding Roosevelt Estate lands under a business named Val-Kill Farms. Through the 1950s, Mrs. Roosevelt and her son John, who moved into Stone Cottage, maintained residential uses along with recreational uses that included swimming, walking, horseback riding, tennis, badminton, children's play, and picnicking. Mrs. Roosevelt brought visitors to Val-Kill who represented a broad range of social, economic, and political backgrounds. The Roosevelts continued agricultural uses on the fields through the latter years of Mrs. Roosevelt's life, but did not manage the forests as FDR had.

Evaluation:
Existing land uses at Val-Kill reflect the change from private residential property to public park through the establishment of the national historic site in 1977 and its opening to the public in 1984. After Mrs. Roosevelt's death in 1962, residential uses changed as John Roosevelt converted the buildings to rental apartments. Today, there are no residential uses, but education programming by the park and the Eleanor Roosevelt Center at Val Kill (ERVK) continue Mrs. Roosevelt's humanitarian values through exhibits, lectures, and conferences at Stone Cottage and the ERVK conference center and offices. The park continues agricultural use through an agreement with a local farmer who cuts hay on the field south of Val-Kill Lane. Uses introduced since the opening of the park include an area near the entrance along NY 9G that can be used by those wishing to exercise their First Amendment (free speech) rights; extension of the Hyde Park Trail through the site, following a mown shoulder along Val-Kill Lane, and the Top Cottage Trail (see Figure 16); and an area of the South Field that is used for overflow parking during special events. (Superintendent's Compendium, ROVA)

The park and its partners have reestablished and rehabilitated features in the core area to convey the historic recreational uses of the grounds. These include the cutting garden that is planted annually; returning open water to the swimming pool, which remains non-useable for swimming; and seasonally setting outdoor furniture on the swimming pool patio and walled garden patio that can be used by park visitors. Plans are also underway to return swings and the see-saw to the play equipment on the peninsula, although they will most likely remain non-operational.

Landscape Characteristic: Topography

Historic Condition (to 1962):
Topography is the built or manipulated three-dimensional configuration of the landscape surface characterized by features (such as slope and articulation) and orientation (such as elevation and solar aspect). The Val-Kill landscape is characterized primarily by its natural landforms. Changes to the natural grade were made prior to Roosevelt ownership, when ditches were extended through the field north of Val-Kill Lane, most likely to drain the area for use as pasture. Changes to the natural landforms dating to Mrs. Roosevelt's lifetime include manipulation of the Fall Kill streambed and wetlands in 1930 and 1937 to create and enlarge Val-Kill Pond, and creating a terrace south of Stone Cottage in 1935 to provide a level area for the swimming pool. An indent in the banks of the terrace allowed for access to the subgrade pool equipment room. In addition, minor grading was undertaken during the historic period as part of the building of roads and creating of gardens and other designed landscape areas within the core of Val-Kill.

Evaluation:
The topography of the Val-Kill landscape remains substantially intact from the historic period. Notable changes include natural siltation in Val-Kill Pond that has raised the grade and reduced the amount of open water. As part of the development of the site beginning in 1980, the park made minor changes to the natural topography to build two parking lots, and to widen Val-Kill Lane. Fill was most likely brought in to raise the grade around the new caretaker's house that was built in 1964 within the north field, and to build the ERVK conference center and parking lot on the same site in 2007-2008.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
North Field Ditches	207894	Contributing					No
Pool Terrace	207895	Contributing					No

Landscape Characteristic: Vegetation

Historic Condition (to 1962):
Vegetation includes planted or managed deciduous and evergreen trees, shrubs, vines, groundcovers, and herbaceous plants and plant communities, whether indigenous or introduced in the landscape. Prior to the creation of Val-Kill, the landscape of the Bennett Farm included cultivated crops, pasture grasses, and managed woodlots. This agricultural and forestry vegetation remained a part of the Val-Kill landscape throughout the historic period. After FDR purchased the Bennet Farm in 1911, he leased it to farmers who continued raising crops and pasturing livestock. In 1931, an orchard of apple and pear trees was planted southwest of the core of Val-Kill, just south of the Tompkins Farm-Bennett Farm boundary. FDR introduced scientific forestry on the Bennett Farm soon after he acquired the property. In 1914, he set out a forest plantation of white pine, identified as Plot D, on an old field east of the Fall Kill. In the early 1930s, the New York State College of Forestry at Syracuse University set out two experimental forest plantations based on an agreement with FDR begun in 1929. The two plantations, identified as Plots 31 and 32, were set out in a swampy area east of the Fall Kill to test the growth of tulip poplar, black walnut, and Northern white-cedar.

Vegetation in the domestic core of Val-Kill was shaped with the construction of Stone Cottage in 1925–1926 and the Val-Kill Cottage (The Factory) in 1926–1928. In these early years of Val-Kill,

the landscape was ornamented by sycamore, Eastern red-cedar, and gray birch that were thinned from the old-field successional woods on the site to become part of the maintained grounds of mown grass that surrounded the buildings and extended down to the Fall Kill. Informal groupings of deciduous shrubs were planted around the buildings and on the bank around the first swimming pool. Two elms flanked the west front of Stone Cottage. Boston ivy and climbing hydrangea were planted to climb up the walls of Stone Cottage, and painted trellises were affixed to the stucco walls of the Factory, presumably for vines. A bed planted with cosmos and later lilac lined the low stone wall that separated the Stone Cottage lawn from the picnic grounds on the peninsula to the north. Borders of red pine, most likely transplanted from FDR's forest plantations, were set out along Val-Kill Lane to screen the swimming pool built in 1935, and around the circular entrance drive to Stone Cottage. A grove of oak trees shaded the western and northern parts of the peninsula (picnic grounds).

Changes in the character of vegetation in the core of Val-Kill coincided with the closing of Val-Kill Industries in 1936, when Eleanor Roosevelt made the factory her cottage and Nancy Cook and Marion Dickerman made Stone Cottage their own home. Mrs. Roosevelt maintained the informal character of the plantings around her cottage, which included lilacs, flowering dogwood, smoke bush, lilacs, arborvitae, Boston ivy, and wisteria. A Norway spruce windbreak was planted north of the cottage, spirea hedges off the west porch to define a lawn area, and lilacs to enclose a staff yard on the east side of the house. In the walled garden at the east side of Stone Cottage built in 1936, Nancy Cook planted a mixed bed of shrubs and perennials within a brick border and climbing roses at the loggia columns. She also created extensive borders of flowering trees, shrubs, vines, and perennials in a large, fenced garden that extended from the south entrance to Stone Cottage west around the back of the walled garden. She also added borders of flowering perennials and shrubs, including azaleas and low border hedges, to frame the swimming pool terrace, and maintained pots of flowering annuals on the Stone Cottage patio. On the west bank of Val-Kill Pond in the viewshed of Stone Cottage, Nancy Cook maintained beds of phlox and other flowering annuals, along with daylilies and ornamental trees including Scots pine. The last major addition of vegetation to the core area during this time was in 1937, when a cutting garden enclosed by an arborvitae hedge was established south of the Playhouse, with a vegetable garden, greenhouse, and cold/hot beds to its north.

When Nancy Cook and Marion Dickerman left Val-Kill in 1947, they took many of the plantings in the fenced garden that surrounded the walled garden, which transitioned to an informal, undefined part of the grounds. FDR's forest plantations were left unmanaged, although the 1914 white pine plantation (Plot D) had matured to the extent that there was little succession in its understory, where Mrs. Roosevelt enjoyed walking through what she called the Secret Woods. Few new vegetation features were added to the landscape after 1947, but Mrs. Roosevelt continued to add plantings, including many spring flowering bulbs. In ca.1960, John Roosevelt created a rectangular rose garden in the lawn west of Val-Kill Cottage so his mother could see flowers from her sleeping porch. By the 1950s, flowering shrubs, vines, and herbaceous plant species around the cottages outside of the cutting garden included Boston ivy, wisteria, climbing hydrangea, azaleas, mock orange, Vanhoutte spirea, rhododendron, mountain laurel, lilacs, roses, phlox, anemones, pansies, African and French marigolds, annual geraniums, daylilies, iris, lily-of-the-valley, peonies, grape hyacinth, crocuses, daffodils, snow drops, and tulips. Other changes to vegetation occurred due to growth and decline. Many of the original Eastern red-cedars around the cottages were removed by the early 1960s.

Evaluation:
Vegetation at Val-Kill today reflects the overall informal character that existed during the later years of Mrs. Roosevelt's lifetime, including many notable specimen trees, hedgerows, and shrub and flower beds (Figures 17, 18). After 1962, managed vegetation declined as John Roosevelt transitioned the property to tenant use. He and caretaker Charles Curnan continued to maintain livestock pastures and agricultural crops in the western part of the site. Conditions deteriorated more significantly after the Roosevelts let go of the caretaker and sold the property in 1970. By 1977 when the National Park Service acquired Val-Kill, there was little remaining of the gardens and other managed plantings. As part of the opening of the site to the public in 1984, the National Park Service maintained surviving mature trees and shrubs, replanted the red pines along the swimming

pool terrace that had lost their screening function, and rebuilt the rose garden and cutting garden. More recently, the park has reestablished the beds in the walled garden and along the swimming pool terrace, replaced the failing red-pine screen with Eastern red-cedar, replanted lost elm trees in front of Stone Cottage, replanted a portion of the orchard, and introduced a vegetable garden bed north of the cutting garden. Deer browsing required the addition of a fence around the cutting garden. The grounds around the cottages and on the peninsula retain many trees from the historic period, including two sycamores, a hemlock, a Norway spruce, a birch grove, and an oak grove. Mown turf along Val-Kill Pond has transitioned instances of narrow-leafed cattail, water smartweed, red maple, and button-bush. The fields in the western half of the site are maintained through haying and mowing. Most of the experimental plantations (Plots 31 and 32) have lost their managed character due to naturalization, but the white pine plantation (Plot D) remains intact, although successional woods have grown up along its edges (Figure 19).

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Bennett Tenant Farmhouse Arborvitae Row	207896	Contributing					No
Cutting Garden Hedge	207897	Contributing			Asset	1422783	No
Cutting Garden Beds	207898	Contributing			Asset	1454219	No
Historic Core Turf	207899	Contributing			Asset	1422796	No
Historic Core Specimen Trees	207900	Contributing			Asset	1422872	No
Loggia Climbing Roses	207901	Contributing			Asset	1476974	No
Norway Spruce Windbreak	207902	Contributing					No
NYS College of Forestry Experimental Plantations – Plots 31 and 32	207903	Contributing			Asset	1422874	No
Orchard	207904	Contributing			Asset	1422787	Yes
Peninsula Oak Grove	207905	Contributing					No
Pool Terrace Shrub and Herbaceous Borders	207906	Contributing			Asset	1480020	No
Pool Terrace Evergreen Screen and Mixed Grove	207907	Contributing					No
Southwest Pond Bank Plantings	207908	Contributing			Asset	1478144	No
Stone Cottage Vines	207909	Contributing			Asset	1478139	Yes
Stone Cottage Entry Garden and Foundation Shrubs	207910	Contributing			Asset	1480020	No
Stone Cottage Lilac Hedgerow	207911	Contributing			Asset	1480020	No
Walled Garden Birch Tree	207912	Contributing			Asset	1476974	No
Walled Garden Planting Bed	207913	Contributing			Asset	1476974	No

Val-Kill Cottage Shrubs	207914	Contributing			Asset	1480020	No
Val-Kill Cottage Wisteria and Boston Ivy Vines	207915	Contributing					No
Val-Kill Cottage Caretakers Yard Hedge	207916	Contributing					No
Val-Kill Cottage West Lawn Hedges	207917	Contributing					No
Val-Kill Lane Arborvitae Row	207918	Contributing					No
Val-Kill Lane Norway Spruce Row	207919	Contributing					No
Val-Kill Lane-Road to Top Cottage Red Pine Row	207920	Contributing					No
White Pine Plantation - Plot D	207921	Contributing			Asset	1422874	No
Rose Garden (Fenced Garden) Beds	207922	Noncontributing – Compatible			Asset	1476893	No
Vegetable Garden Bed	207923	Noncontributing – Compatible					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 17. Trees, shrubs, mown turf, vines, and herbaceous plants around Val-Kill Cottage and the west lawn, looking southwest toward Stone Cottage, 2023. Many of the trees and shrubs date to the historic period. (SUNY ESF)



Figure 18. Arborvitae hedge and herbaceous plants in the cutting garden built in 1937, removed in ca.1965, and rebuilt by 1984, looking south, 2023. The building is the potting shed (west garden shed) . (SUNY ESF)



Figure 19. External view of the 1914 white pine plantation (Plot D) that Mrs. Roosevelt called the "secret woods,: looking northeast from Val-Kill Lane across wetlands within the former upper part of Val-Kill Pond, 2019. (SUNY ESF)

Landscape Characteristic: Buildings and Structures

Historic Condition (to 1962):
Buildings are elements constructed primarily for sheltering any form of human activity in a landscape, while structures are elements constructed for functional purposes other than sheltering human activity. When the Roosevelts began to develop Val-Kill in 1924, the early 19th-century farmhouse and barns on the Bennett Farm were on the west side of Violet Avenue; the only known building within the present Val-Kill property was a 19th-century tenant farmhouse north of Val-Kill Lane. There were numerous stone walls (stone fences) throughout the property that marked field and property boundaries, and a corduroy bridge that carried the farm road (Val-Kill Lane) across the Fall Kill. The first building to be built at Val-Kill was Stone Cottage, built in 1925–1926 according to the design of FDR and architect Henry Toombs to evoke Dutch colonial-era building traditions of the Hudson Valley. It was set on a rise that overlooked the Fall Kill and the farm fields in the distance. The second building, the two-story Val-Kill Industries Factory completed in 1926 and with a major addition in 1929, was designed by Henry Toombs using in an unadorned style and stucco cladding to house the furniture and forge shops. This was followed in 1928 by a three-car garage and tool storage building that was expanded to house the Val-Kill Industries forge in 1934. Structures added or redesigned included the timber bridge over the Fall Kill that was rebuilt in 1930 (and again in 1934) with a concrete dam to expand the open water of the Fall Kill, creating Val-Kill Pond, and a rustic stone barbecue built in 1933 in the center of the peninsula (picnic grounds) according to the design of Nancy Cook and Henry Toombs. The closure of Val-Kill Industries in 1936 allowed Mrs. Roosevelt to renovate the two-winged Factory into her own cottage, and Nancy Cook and Marion Dickerman to expand Stone Cottage with a living room addition that opened onto a brick-wall-enclosed garden with a classical frame loggia. The garage and forge building was converted into what was named the Playhouse. The creation of the cutting garden in 1937 included addition of a small sash greenhouse and hot/cold frame, and within a few years, a tool shed and potting shed hot frame. Mrs. Roosevelt had a concrete-block combination garage and stable built in 1937 to the east of cutting garden, with access off the back entrance road, so that she could keep her horse at Val-Kill instead of at Springwood. After FDR's death in 1945, Mrs. Roosevelt moved a children's play house known as the Dollhouse to Val-Kill so that her grandchildren could continue to use it. The only other building or structure that Mrs. Roosevelt added after this time was an asphalt-surfaced tennis court built on the peninsula in 1950. Another major structure added to the landscape was not built by the Roosevelt family, although they presumably approved it: a major power transmission line built by Central Hudson Gas & Power in ca. 1955 across the northern and eastern parts of the property.

Evaluation:
The primary buildings and structures at Val-Kill strongly evoke the character of Mrs. Roosevelt's lifetime, with no major removals or exterior alterations aside from removal and reconstruction of the loggia in the walled garden (Figures 22, 23, and 24, see also Figure 21). After Mrs. Roosevelt's death in 1962, John Roosevelt converted the two cottages and Playhouse to apartments; around the time of her death, he replaced the loggia with a concrete block wall and added a laundry wing to Stone Cottage. In 1963, caretaker Charles Curnan's house, the old Bennett tenant house, burned, and in 1964, Curnan built a new house to the north. At this time, there were several farm outbuildings that Curnan and John Roosevelt used to raise sheep and other livestock. All of the buildings at Val-Kill deteriorated after John and Anne Roosevelt sold the Val-Kill property to developers in 1970. Between 1980 and 1984, the National Park Service embarked on restoring and rehabilitating the historic buildings and structures across the site and removed the outbuildings around the Curnan house. Stone Cottage became the home of ERVK, Val-Kill Cottage was refurnished to interpret Mrs. Roosevelt's lifetime, and the Curnan house was used for park staff housing. In 1985, the park created an opening in the Bennett-Tompkins boundary stone wall to allow vehicular access into the new visitor parking lot. In 2007, the non-historic Curnan house was demolished to build the new ERVK conference center and offices. In 2012, the park removed John Roosevelt's laundry addition and concrete wall at Stone Cottage and completed an accurate reconstruction of the 1937 loggia, using the intact brick floor. The reconstruction has a short fence with cross rails connecting it to the stone cottage, and there is an air conditioning unit is just outside the cross rails. This unknown missing piece (and contemporary fence solution) is not original. Although the Val-Kill buildings are not used as they were historically, the park has carefully maintained their historic appearance. The new ERVK building is screened by woods and is not visible from Val-Kill Lane and the core area. (Review comments, deCordova, 8 November 2024)

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Apple Orchard Gateposts	207958	Contributing	40822				No
Bennett-Dumphy Boundary Wall	207959	Contributing	40824				No
Bennett-Tompkins Boundary Wall (Orchard Wall)	207960	Contributing	40824				No
Bluestone Pool Deck	207961	Contributing	22600				No
Bridge and Dam	207962	Contributing	22699		Location	60631	No
Cutting Garden Tool Shed/East Garden Shed	207963	Contributing	22697		Location	60648	Yes
Cutting Garden Potting Shed/ West Garden Shed	207964	Contributing	22316		Location	60649	Yes
Dollhouse	207965	Contributing	22297		Location	60647	Yes
Playhouse	207966	Contributing	22295		Location	60646	Yes
Pool Shed and Stone Walls	207967	Contributing	22600		Asset	1422767	No
Pool Pump Shed	207968	Contributing			Asset	1477026	No
Stone Cottage Pool Patio	207969	Contributing			Asset	1422770	No
Stable-Garage	207970	Contributing	22315		Location	60650	Yes
Stone Barbecue	207971	Contributing	22601		Asset	1422724	Yes
Stone Cottage	207972	Contributing	22294		Location	60644	Yes
Stone Cottage Retaining Wall and Steps	207973	Contributing	40825		Asset	1476888	No
Tennis Court	207974	Contributing	22653		Asset	45716	Yes
Val-Kill Cottage (The Factory)	207975	Contributing	22701		Location	60643	No
Val-Kill Forest Stone Walls	207976	Contributing	40824		Asset	45712	No
Val-Kill Lane Stone Wall	207977	Contributing	40824		Asset	45712	No
Val-Kill Cottage Caretaker’s Yard Stone Walls	207978	Contributing	40824				No
Violet Avenue Stone Walls	207979	Contributing	40824		Asset	45712	No
Walled Garden Brick Wall and Hearth	207980	Contributing	40826		Asset	1476999	No
Walled Garden Loggia	207981	Contributing	40826		Asset	1422766	No
Walled Garden Brick Patio	207982	Contributing	40826		Asset	1422774	No
Central Hudson Power Transmission Line	207983	Noncontributing – Compatible					No

ERVK Conference Center and Offices	207984	Noncontributing – Compatible			Location	227858	Yes
Fall Kill South Dam	207985	Noncontributing – Incompatible			Asset	1422844	No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 22. Mrs. Roosevelt's cottage, known as Val-Kill Cottage and originally the Val-Kill Industries Factory, looking north, 2023. The inconspicuous main entrance is on the opposite side of the house. (SUNY ESF)



Figure 23. The loggia in the walled garden, built in 1937, removed in the early 1960s, and reconstructed in 2012, looking north across the walled garden patio, 2023. (SUNY ESF)



Figure 24. The timber bridge and dam on the Fall Kill, built in ca.1930 in place of an earlier bridge, looking northwest with Val-Kill Pond in the background, 2023. (SUNY ESF)

Landscape Characteristic: Circulation

Historic Condition (to 1962):
Circulation refers to the spaces, features, and applied material finishes that constitute systems of movement in a landscape. Circulation within the Val-Kill landscape at the time the Roosevelts began to develop Val-Kill in 1924 included an east-west farm road, present Val-Kill Lane, that extended from the Bennett farmstead along Violet Avenue through the western fields and then across the Fall Kill to the rougher pastures and woodlots at the west end of the Bennett Farm. A small road extended to the Bennett tenant house north of Val-Kill Lane (part of present ERVK road). The Roosevelts extended and improved the earthen road system to connect with Stone Cottage and the Factory completed in 1925-1926. Subsequent additions included a short road off Val-Kill Lane through the Bennett-Tompkins stone wall to access the orchard that was planted in 1931, a road to the rear of the cottages that FDR had built in 1933 to connect with the Dumphy Farm to the north that he was planning to purchase (present back entrance road), and another road that extended east to Dutchess Hill that FDR had built in 1937 to access his newly-acquired Rohan Farm and his planned retreat, Top Cottage. In ca.1940, FDR laid out another road that looped south from the road to Top Cottage through the eastern woods of the Tompkins Farm. The advent of World War II introduced many security features across the Roosevelt Estate, which included new roads to allow personnel in Jeeps to access jack (communications) lines, including two lines that extended through the woods east of Val-Kill.

Within the core of Val-Kill, several changes in circulation occurred following the closure of Val-Kill Industries in 1936. Mrs. Roosevelt converted the Factory into her own cottage, which allowed Nancy Cook and Marion Dickerman to make Stone Cottage their own home. The changes, built in ca. 1936–1937 along with expansion of Stone Cottage, included bluestone walks between the cottages and a circular entrance drive to Stone Cottage. The cutting garden, laid out in 1937, featured orthogonal earth or gravel walks between the raised beds. Mrs. Roosevelt made no known changes to circulation within the core of Val-Kill during her latter lifetime through the early 1960s. In ca.1953, the back entrance road became connected to Roosevelt Drive, one of the main roads in the Harbourd Hills subdivision; another portion of this road cut off the Road to Top Cottage.

Evaluation:
Circulation within the Val-Kill landscape today reflects the character from the historic period with alterations and additions made for public access (Figures 20, 21). After Mrs. Roosevelt's death in 1962, John Roosevelt built a short road through the cutting garden to connect with the back entrance road, to make access easier for his tenants. In 1964, caretaker Charles Curnan extended the road to the Bennett tenant house to his new house built to the north. As part of the National Park Service's rehabilitation of Val-Kill in preparation for public opening completed in 1984, it removed the road through the cutting garden, built a staff and special events parking area in the woods east of the Stable-Garage, widened Val-Kill Lane for use as the park entrance road, and repaired the earthen roads and bluestone walks within the core area. In 1985, after determining a visitor shuttle system from the FDR Home and Library would not work, the park built a parking lot in the eastern half of the orchard field. Val-Kill Lane and the orchard field parking lot were paved in chip-seal asphalt in 1999. In 2007, two additional circulation features were added to the Val-Kill landscape: a parking lot at the new ERVK center, which was screened by woods, and the Top Cottage Trail that was built to reestablish the connection between Val-Kill and Top Cottage, which in the 1950s was severed by the Harbourd Hills subdivision. Another trail known as Eleanor's Walk was designated on the ca.1940 loop road. While the conversion to park use has introduced and altered circulation features, overall circulation still conveys the historic character of the Val-Kill landscape

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Back Entrance Road (RT 401)	207924	Contributing	40821		Location	60621	Yes
Bluestone Walkways	207925	Contributing	40823		Location	236096	No
Connector Road	207926	Contributing	40821				No
Jack-Line Jeep Road South (Fall Kill Trail)	207927	Contributing	40827		Location	346044	No
Loop Road (Eleanor’s Walk Trail)	207928	Contributing	40827		Location	236043	No
Road to Top Cottage	207929	Contributing	40821		Location	236046	No
Stone Cottage Driveway Circle (RT 402, part)	207930	Contributing	40821				No
Top Cottage Trail	207931	Contributing	40827		Location	236042	No
Two-Track Service Road	207932	Contributing	40821				No
Val-Kill Cottage Garage Driveway (RT 402, part)	207933	Contributing	40821				No
Val-Kill Lane (Main Entrance Road, RT 10)	207934	Contributing	40821		Location	60618	No
Accessible Parking Spaces	207935	Noncontributing – Compatible			Location	103755	No
Cutting Garden Access Path	207936	Noncontributing – Compatible	40827		Location	236095	No
ERVK Parking Lot (RT 0904)	207937	Noncontributing – Compatible					No
ERVK Road	207938	Noncontributing – Compatible			Location	60619	No
Main Parking Lot (RT 0900)	207939	Noncontributing – Compatible			Location	103749	Yes
Main Parking Lot Walk	207940	Noncontributing – Compatible			Asset	1422772	No
East Parking Lot (Staff, Special Events) (RT 0902, 0903)	207941	Noncontributing – Compatible			Location	103757	Yes

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 20. The earthen driveway circle at Stone Cottage, looking west to the cottage and swimming pool terrace, 2023. (SUNY ESF)



Figure 21. Bluestone walkways showing the walk to the south (main) entrance of Stone Cottage from the driveway circle, looking west, 2023. (SUNY ESF)

Landscape Characteristic: Views and Vistas

Historic Condition (to 1962):
A view is the expansive and/or panoramic prospect of a broad range of vision that may be naturally occurring or deliberately contrived. A vista is a controlled prospect of a discrete, linear range of vision, which is deliberately contrived. Expansive views across open farm fields were characteristic of the Bennett Farm prior to the development of Val-Kill beginning in 1924. Old-field succession, with thick underbrush, initially limited outward views, except along the Fall-Kill. Stone Cottage, as completed in 1925, was sited to take advantage of views looking west across the Fall Kill and to the open farm fields below. This view was created through clearing of successional woods and creation of an open lawn that extended from Stone Cottage to the creek and later pond; this landscape also created a reverse view, of Stone Cottage across the pond from the approach on Val-Kill Lane. The construction of the existing swimming pool in 1935 took advantage of these same western views, and a screen of red pines along Val-Kill Lane blocked views looking onto the pool. Expansion of Val-Kill Pond in 1937 created more expansive views north from the peninsula (picnic grounds) and from Mrs. Roosevelt's Cottage, with FDR's 1914 white pine plantation framing the northern and eastern horizons. A windbreak of Norway spruce planted in the mid-1930s eventually screened these views from Mrs. Roosevelt's Cottage.

Evaluation:
Views in the Val-Kill landscape have changed since Mrs. Roosevelt's death in 1962, largely due to the growth of succession woods and wetlands in former open spaces, but views from and to Stone Cottage remain (Figure 25). These include the view from the approach on Val-Kill Lane, and from Stone Cottage and its patio looking out across Val-Kill Pond; views of the pond have been restricted due to growth of vegetation, and views across the south field have been reduced to growth of willows and other trees west of the pond and along Val-Kill Lane. Views across the south field, which the park maintains through haying, remain, but views across the north field have been greatly reduced since 1962 due to growth of woods that occurred after Charles Curnan and John Roosevelt stopped using the field for pasture prior to 1970. The park removed a line of evergreens along Val-Kill Lane in the viewshed from Stone Cottage, probably planted by John Roosevelt in the early1960s, to reopen the views across the south field (1978 oblique aerial photo, CLR Part I figure 5.6). In recent decades, siltation in Val-Kill pond has led to growth of tall wetland vegetation that has blocked or limited views looking west and north from Val-Kill Cottage and the peninsula.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
East View of Pond and Stone Cottage from Val-Kill Lane	207986	Contributing					No
West View from Stone Cottage and Pool	207987	Contributing					No
View of Loop Road Pond (FDR Rendezvous Site)	207988	Contributing					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 25. The west view from Stone Cottage and the Stone Cottage patio across Val-Kill Pond and toward the south field, 2023. Also visible is the decrease in historically open water on Val-Kill Pond (constructed water feature) due to growth of wetland vegetation. (SUNY ESF)

Landscape Characteristic: **Constructed Water Features**

Historic Condition (to 1962):
Constructed water features are built features and elements that utilize water for aesthetic or utilitarian functions in the landscape. The flowing water of the Fall Kill drew the Roosevelts and their friends to use its banks as a picnic ground in the early 1920s. At that time, the stream was a meandering channel lined in in part by wetland vegetation. Completion of Stone Cottage on high ground above the creek in 1925 created a lawn that extended down to the creek, but due to the elevation of the building, the views of the water were subtle and so the Roosevelts cleared wetland vegetation along the stream to increase the area of open water. In 1930, they had a dam built beneath the bridge that carried Val-Kill Lane to create a pond with much more open water in the foreground of Stone Cottage. In 1937, the wetlands to the north of the pond were dredged to create an upper pond that was visible from the peninsula (picnic grounds) and Mrs. Roosevelt's cottage in the former factory. The combined lower and upper ponds covered approximately seven acres.

In addition to Val-Kill Pond, there were two other constructed water features in the landscape. The Roosevelts completed a concrete-lined, stream-fed swimming pool along the east bank of the Fall Kill in 1925, just upstream from the bridge. Ten years later, a new, light-blue-painted rectangular concrete swimming pool with a flagstone deck was built on a terrace south of Stone Cottage. Designed by M.K. Hasbrouck, who also designed the pool at the White House, it featured a subgrade equipment room that pumped filtered water that was considered safer for the President's health than the stream water in the old pond, a flagstone deck, a diving board, and a bronze ladder. The swimming pool became, along with the picnic grounds centered on the stone barbecue, a focal point of outdoor gatherings at Val-Kill throughout the remainder of Mrs. Roosevelt's life. The second constructed water feature was a shallow oval basin, referred to as a goldfish pond, which was a focal point in Nancy Cook's walled garden built in 1936–1937. It formed the base of a column with a sculptural figure.

Evaluation:
Constructed water features are a character-defining feature of the Val-Kill landscape and reflect much of their historic character due to recent rehabilitation of the swimming pool (Figure 26). Loss of character has resulted from decrease in open water on Val-Kill Pond due to natural siltation and growth of wetland vegetation (see Figure 25). After Mrs. Roosevelt's death in 1962, John and Anne Roosevelt continued to live at Stone Cottage and most likely maintained the swimming pool. They divorced in 1965 and moved out of Stone Cottage, and John converted the house to a rental unit and most likely ceased operation of the swimming pool. After he sold the Val-Kill property to developers in 1970, the swimming pool, Val-Kill Pond, and walled garden pool deteriorated. Two constructed water features were created after 1962 outside of the core area of Val-Kill. One was a small pond in the north field that John and caretaker Charles Curnan created for their sheep that they raised along with other livestock. The second feature was a pond on the Fall Kill at the south end of the site that was most likely built by the adjacent property owner in the Lyons subdivision begun in ca.1953 within the Tompkins Farm; this dam was where a bridge carried a World War II-era jack-line jeep road across the Fall Kill. Both remain today.

The National Park Service rehabilitation of the landscape after creation of the national historic site in 1977 stabilized these features and added a permanent wood-frame cover over the swimming pool to address safety concerns; this cover was removed in 2018 to reestablish the appearance of open water through installation of a false floor. In recent decades, park efforts to restore the historic extent of open water on Val-Kill Pond have been impacted over concerns about impacts to natural resources.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Sheep Pond	207989	Contributing					No
Walled Garden Basin	207990	Contributing					No
Swimming Pool	207991	Contributing	022600		Asset	1422668	No
Val-Kill Pond	207992	Contributing			Asset	1478144	No
Fall Kill South Pond	207993	Noncontributing – Incompatible			Location	73646	No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 26. Val-Kill's second swimming pool built in 1935, showing results of recent rehabilitation that added a false floor for safety, looking south from the pool patio, 2023. In the background is a recently reestablished annual bed of marigolds, and in the background is the screen of Eastern red-cedars in place of the original red pines. (SUNY ESF)

Landscape Characteristic: Small Scale Features

Historic Condition (to 1962):
Small-scale features are elements that provide detail and diversity for both functional needs and aesthetic concerns in the landscape. During the three decades that Mrs. Roosevelt lived at Val-Kill, many small scale features were added to the landscape that supported outdoor use. In the early years of Val-Kill through 1947, most of the small-scale features were furnishings that Nancy Cook set out on the pool and walled garden patios, which included pots for plants, awnings and umbrellas, wood Adirondack-style chairs, and more elegant wrought-iron chairs and tables. Nancy Cook also added a classical column that supported a sculptural figure in the pool within the Stone Cottage walled garden built in 1936–1937, and a wood paling (stockade-like) fence that enclosed the outer garden she built around the same time. On her lawn off the west front of her cottage, Mrs. Roosevelt used a mix of furniture styles, including indoor furniture. The 1935 swimming pool included a diving board and bronze ladder, and a rustic wood railing bordered the roof of the equipment room. Other small-scale features added during this time included a steel flagpole installed near the bank of Val-Kill Pond in 1940, and a swingset and see-saw installed on the lawn of the peninsula (picnic area) in ca. 1937. Nancy Cook and Marion Dickerman most likely took the wrought-iron patio furniture, paling fence of the outer garden, and the walled garden column and sculpture when they left Val-Kill in 1947. The Roosevelts replaced the patio furniture with commercially-available iron patio tables and chairs, and aluminum-strap lawn chairs, and installed low, white-painted wire-picket fencing along the planting beds. As part of the construction of the tennis court in 1950, two backstop fences made of wire mesh and steel pipe were added at either end. Honeysuckle vines covered the backstops during Mrs. Roosevelt's lifetime. Other small-scale features in the landscape during the historic period included a terra-cotta bas-relief statue of a boy eating a hot dog on the stack of the stone barbecue, a white sculpture of a kneeling boy above the spurt of the swimming pool, a pedestrian-scale lamppost with a colonial-style luminaire along the bluestone walk between Stone Cottage and Val-Kill Cottage, and wood poles that carried electric and telephone lines to Val-Kill from the north. During the 1950s, John Roosevelt and Charles Curnan added wire fencing in areas to enclose livestock pastures, including in the north field and south of the core of Val-Kill along the forest plantations. The last known small-scale feature added prior to 1962 was a cedar post-and-railing fence around the rose garden that John Roosevelt built for Mrs. Roosevelt in ca.1960.

Evaluation:
Small-scale features within the Val-Kill landscape today consist mostly of non-historic park furnishings, light standards, signs, and HVAC equipment, along with contemporary patio furnishings that evoke the character of historic furnishings (Figure 27). After John Roosevelt moved from Val-Kill in 1965, or after sale of the property to developers in 1970, the patio furnishings and walkway lamppost were lost, and the two boy sculptures were taken away. The diving board, the swings, and the see-saw (leaving the pipe frames) were removed by the time the park opened in 1984. By this time or soon after, the park repaired the cedar fence around the rose garden, and added benches, wayfinding and identification signs, trash receptacles, and lighting, most of which have been replaced and redesigned several times since. Also, at the time of the park's opening in 1984, a small bronze plaque in memory of John Roosevelt (died 1981) was installed in front of the swimming pool spurt, with an inscription by John's second wife, Irene Boyd Roosevelt. The park has the historic seated boy sculpture that stood on the pool spurt in its collections and has installed a replica in the same location. The park also installed a column and sculpture similar to the historic ones in the walled garden pool. Remnants of wire fences remain south of the core and in the north pastures, reflecting the last agricultural use of the property by the Roosevelt family during Mrs. Roosevelt's lifetime. The recent rehabilitation of the swimming pool that included addition of a false floor required the removal of the bronze ladder; the diving board was not returned due to safety concerns. The wire mesh on the tennis court backstops was recently replaced in-kind and in 2024 was planted with Japanese honeysuckle. The park is currently planning to return the swings and see-saw. (Review comments, de Cordova, 8 November 2024)

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Diving Board Stand	207942	Contributing					No
Flagpole	207943	Contributing	40820		Asset	1422682	Yes
Local Power and Telephone Poles	207944	Contributing			Asset	365965	No
Rose Garden (Small Garden) Fence	207945	Contributing			Asset	1422666	No
Seated Boy Sculpture at Pool Spout (Reproduction)	207946	Contributing					No
Swing and Teeter-Totter (remnants)	207947	Contributing	22698		Asset	1422719	No
Tennis Court Backstops	207948	Contributing	22698		Asset	1422720	Yes
Wire Livestock Fence Remnants	207949	Contributing					No
Apple Orchard Fencing	207950	Noncontributing – Compatible			Asset	1422665	Yes
HVAC and Septic Utilities	207951	Noncontributing – Incompatible					No
John Roosevelt Memorial Plaque	207952	Noncontributing – Compatible					No
NPS Signage (not mapped)	207953	Noncontributing – Compatible			Asset	1422722	No
NPS Lighting	207954	Noncontributing – Compatible					No
NPS Furnishings (Benches, Bike Rack, Trash Containers, Picnic Tables)	207955	Noncontributing – Compatible			Asset	1422675	No
NPS Roadway Lights	207956	Noncontributing – Incompatible					No
Walled Garden Statue and Pedestal	207957	Noncontributing – Compatible					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 27. Park visitors using contemporary tables, chairs,and umbrellas on the Stone Cottage patio added to evoke the historic use and character of the landscape, looking east, 2022. (SUNY ESF)

Landscape Characteristic: Archeological Sites

Archeological sites are the locations of ruins, traces, or deposited artifacts in the landscape and are evidenced by the presence of either surface or subsurface features. Only sites identified in approved National Register documentation are identified in this report.

Historic Condition (to 1962):
There were few built features that were visible ruins or traces during Mrs. Roosevelt's lifetime at Val-Kill. The first swimming pool close to the Fall Kill was replaced in 1935 and its site was filled and most likely covered with earth and grass. Plantings south and east of the Stone Cottage walled gardens during Mrs. Roosevelt's later years were remnants of the outer garden that Nancy Cook developed beginning in 1936 and removed in part in 1947. Stone walls (see Buildings and Structures) in the eastern woods were remnants of past agricultural use and property boundaries.

Evaluation:
As a maintained landscape, visible ruins and remnants of built features were not characteristic of the Val-Kill landscape during Mrs. Roosevelt's lifetime and are not characteristic of the landscape today. Subsurface built remnants may exist at the site of the first swimming pool replaced in 1935, the Bennett tenant house that burned in 1963, and of the paling fence and sprinkler system that Nancy Cook developed in the outer garden at Stone Cottage that was removed by 1947. Additional research is needed to determine whether surface remnants of a refuse dump off the Loop Road on the Tompkins Farm (Eleanor's Walk Trail) predates Mrs. Roosevelt's death in 1962.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Loop Road Dump Site	207994	Undetermined					No
North Field Road Trace	207995	Undetermined					No

Condition

Assessment Interval (Years): 7

Next Assessment Due Date: 04/17/2032

Condition Assessment and Impacts

Condition Assessment: Fair

Assessment Date: 04/17/2025

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

The current condition of the Val-Kill landscape is Fair. The property shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the landscape characteristics will cause the property to degrade to a poor condition.

The park and its partners have made substantial improvements to the Val-Kill landscape since the original 2005 CLI and the last condition assessment 2011, notably through rehabilitation of the swimming pool, cutting garden, bluestone walkways and patios, and the tennis court; the reintroduction of lost planting beds, shrubs, trees, and patio furniture; repair of dry-laid stone walls; replanting of the orchard; and the replacement of park signage and benches. The main outstanding landscape condition issue is Val-Kill Pond, which continues to lose open water to siltation and is obscured by the growth of wetland vegetation that has altered the historic open spatial character and views. Other condition issues include the road to Top Cottage that has lost its historic character due to lack of grading and narrowing to a trail; drainage challenges at the Stone Cottage entry drive circle; loss of the open character of the north field and the former paddock south of the cutting garden due to post-1962 successional woods; and the spread of invasive species along wooded edges and streambanks.

Condition Assessment: Fair

Assessment Date: 09/17/2021

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

Provisional. The condition reassessment for this CLI has been delayed due to Covid-19 travel restrictions and staffing shortages. In the meantime, the most recent condition assessment will remain in place until it is reassessed as part of a comprehensive update of the entire CLI. Planning and scheduling this update will occur in FY 2022.

Condition Assessment: Fair

Assessment Date: 08/02/2011

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

In consultation with Dave Hayes, Natural Resource Program Manager at the park, and with concurrence from the Superintendent, the Val-Kill landscape is currently in fair condition. The definition of “fair” is as follows: “indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the landscape characteristics will cause the inventory unit to degrade to a poor condition.”

The 2005 CLI for Val-Kill stated that, "Overall, the site retained integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, and association to its 1924-1962 period of significance because of the existing physical features and characteristics that related to Mrs Roosevelt's experience at Val-Kill. The property had diminished integrity related to materials and workmanship as a result of changes from their historic appearance. Plant materials have matured and been removed due to their natural life cycles or the predictable damage of weather and human impacts" (CLI, page 35). The CLI also identified several tasks related to stabilizing stone walls, fieldstone retaining walls, and pedestrian paths; reestablishing the historic width of the driveway; replanting two specimen trees; and repaving the tennis court (CLI, page 67).

According to the PMIS database, a project entitled "Draft Short-Term Enhancements at Val-Kill” (PMIS 135960) will address some of these items and others as well. Specifically, the project will entail: installing up to 4 waysides at key locations; recessing the pool deck; narrowing the roads and turning radii of the drives to be more in keeping with their historic appearance; replanting red pines (now overgrown) to fulfill their original intent; improve deer fencing by using flexible, clear “deer protection”; blocking “desire line” informal path to Stone Cottage; reconfiguring the patio and entrance at the Playhouse to enhance handicapped access; installing historically appropriate benches; redesigning and interpreting the orchard; redesigning the parking lot for greater efficiency to plan for overflow parking; and planning and design for the shuttle stop. Funding for the project has been requested for FY 2013. Another project requested for 2013 aims to remove sediment to restore the historic appearance of the pond (PMIS 154284).

Condition Assessment: Fair

Assessment Date: 06/23/2005

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

Impacts

Type of Impact: Adjacent Lands

Other Impact:

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Narrative: Loss of open fields west of NY 9G (HOFR Upland Farms) has altered Val-Kill's historic open character and views.

Date Identified: 09/24/2023

Type of Impact: Deferred Maintenance

Other Impact:

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Narrative: Loss of open water and growth of woody vegetation in Val-Kill Pond due to lack of dredging; loss of road character due to lack of grading on road to Top Cottage.

Date Identified: 09/24/2023

Type of Impact: Improper Drainage

Other Impact:

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Narrative: Ponding on Stone Cottage entry drive circle

Date Identified: 09/24/2023

Type of Impact: Other

Other Impact: Historic Materials

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Narrative: Maintaining historic circulation materials and conditions seriously challenges park efforts to meet federal accessible codes and should be re-addressed regularly to explore new products and best practices.

Date Identified: 12/10/2024

Type of Impact: Release To Succession

Other Impact:

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Narrative: Conversion of portions of the north field to woods, and naturalization and loss of historic managed character in the experimental forest plantations (Plots 31, 32).

Date Identified: 09/24/2023

Type of Impact: Structural Deterioration

Other Impact:

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Narrative: Deterioration of stone walls.

Date Identified: 09/24/2023

Type of Impact: Vegetation/Invasive Plants

Other Impact:

External or Internal: Both Internal and External

Impact Narrative: Spread of non-native invasive species, particularly along stream and woodland edges

Date Identified: 09/24/2023

Treatment

Stabilization Measures

Treatment Documents

Treatment Type: Rehabilitation

Treatment Completed: No

Document Type: Cultural Landscape Report Parts 1 and 2

Document Date: 2013-05-21

Title:

IRMA Link:

Narrative:

The “Cultural Landscape Report for Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site, Volume II: Treatment” (2013), provides guidelines and specific treatment tasks for rehabilitation of the cultural landscape based on the direction of the park’s General Management Plan (2010). These recommendations reflect a treatment philosophy that calls for maintaining the landscape as a living legacy of Eleanor Roosevelt, where the uses and values she held most dear are continued in current park programming and operations. The recommendations call for enhancing the historic character of the landscape as it evolved through the later years of Mrs. Roosevelt’s life in the late 1950s and early 1960s, to reflect the height of development under her stewardship and that of her son, John Roosevelt, who lived at Stone Cottage with his family beginning in 1950. The recommendations include objectives of returning lost details to the landscape that were not part of the park’s initial rehabilitation of the site in the early 1980s. The treatment recommendations are intended to allow visitors to better understand the landscape as Mrs. Roosevelt knew it, and also to see the passage of time since her death in the patina of built materials, growth of vegetation, and site programming that makes connections between current humanitarian issues and those advanced by Mrs. Roosevelt. The recommended treatment also supports continued uses that existed historically, such as agriculture, walking/hiking, gardening, and social gatherings, and return of features that reflect those uses.

Approved Treatment Costs

Cost Narrative:

Bibliography and Supplemental Information

Bibliography:

Citation Author	Citation Title	Year of Publication	Citation Publisher	Citation Type	Citation Location	Citation Number
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	Eleanor Roosevelt Biography, https://www.fdrlibrary.org/er-biography		FDR Presidential Library and Museum			
Auwaerter, John and John F. Sears, Ph.D.	FDR and the Land: Roosevelt Estate Historic Resource Study [HRS]	2011	NPS Olmsted Center			
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Baker, Kristin	Cultural Landscape Report for Springwood (Part I) [CLR]	1998	NPS Olmsted Center			
Kelley, Tina	“In Their Footsteps,” New York Times, 2 May 2004. https://www.nytimes.com/2004/05/02/nyregion/in-their-footsteps.html	2004	New York Times			

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Roosevelt, Eleanor.	“My Day,” syndicated column, 1936-1962. Compiled by Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Project, George Washington University, http://www.gwu.edu/-erpapers/myday/	1938	Washington DC: George Washington University			
Torres, Louis	Historic Structure Report, Historical Data, Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site	1980	Denver, CO: National Park Service			

Supplemental Information:

Supplemental Information Title: Dave Hayes, ROVA Integrated Resources Manager

Supplemental Information Narrative:

Landscape Documents:

File Name	Date	Attachment Type
CL-FMSS_crosswalk-ELRO_Val-Kill_CLIUpload.xlsx		Other Report

Source