



North & South Stair Metalwork

U.S. CAPITOL, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Our conservators worked with the Architect of the Capitol to perform conservation treatment and maintenance on the metalwork of the north and south approach stairs to the U.S. Capitol, including two decorative cast bronze lampposts, newel posts and two ornamental wrought iron railings with bronze handrails. The north and south approaches to the Capitol are part of a landscape that was designed by Frederick Law Olmsted between 1874 and 1892. The historic metalwork dates to this period.

The metalwork of the north approach was treated in Fall of 2014 as part of a major restoration of the north approach masonry. The pieces were in need of cleaning and refinishing. The bronze retained no protective coating and had corroded to an overall green patina and the wrought iron railing was corroding under many layers of failing paint.

The lamppost and railing were transported to our Maryland-based studio for treatment. The bronze elements were cleaned of corrosion using a combination of laser cleaning and micro-abrasion, repatinated to a warm brown similar to other Olmsted era-bronze elements on the Capitol Grounds, and coated with an outdoor lacquer. The iron railing was blast-cleaned to remove paint and corrosion and re-finished with a high performance 3-part paint system with high UV resistance. The elements were returned to the Capitol after the completion of masonry restoration and re-installed.

MORE INFORMATION:

<https://evergreene.com/projects/bronze-and-iron-metalwork-conservation/>

SERVICES PERFORMED

Conservation Treatments
Laser Cleaning

PROJECT DETAILS

Client

Architect of the Capitol

Original Landscape Architect

Frederick Law Olmsted

