



**NARRATIVE SECTION**

<b>Study Unit</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Date Of Construction:</b> <u>1905</u>
<u>Architecture/Landscape Architecture</u>		<b>Architect:</b>
<u>Entertainment/Recreation</u>		<b>Builder:</b>
<u>Religion</u>		<b>Engineer:</b>

Property appears to meet criteria for the National Register of Historic Places: No  
Property is located in a historic district (National and/or local): No  
Property potentially contributes to a historic district (National and/or local):

**Statement of Significance** The park is named for the Catholic missionaries of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate who came to this area in 1848 to minister to the Indians. Led by Fr. Pascal Ricard who selected the site first called St. Joseph's of New Market and claimed 324 acres of land, the priests first lived in a house built by Michael T. Simmons and Samuel B. Crockett, New Market (later Tumwater) pioneers. Fr. Ricard and three other priests cleared land and planted a large garden and later built a chapel and residence for the Indians to whom they ministered. They operated a school there for Indian boys. The Squaxin Indians were the immediate neighbors of the mission and the Nisqually, Puyallup and Snoqualmie among others used the site as a trading center. During their 12 year stay on the site, the priests baptized a number of the Indians and also participated in the building of Olympia and were instrumental in preventing more carnage in the Indian Uprising of 1855-56 in the area. They also built the first Catholic church in Olympia and helped found the first newspaper in the territory -- arguably persuading Isaac Stevens to locate the Territorial Capital in Olympia. After Pascal Ricard left the mission in 1857 and the mission officially closed in 1860. The claim was sold in 1867 after Ricard's death in 1862 to M. Morris and Morris subdivided and resold parts of it. In 1893 taxes were delinquent on part of the property and the land was foreclosed. Olympian Theodore Brown conceived the plan of a park at this location and promoted the idea. A group of Olympia citizens -- T. Kegley, Brown, Elias Payne and P. Troy --promoted the idea of a park and in 1906 the city took possession of the property. The park was landscaped through volunteer efforts and was the recipient of gifts from Leopold Schmidt. He gave the chalet which was in the park for many years, the Olympia Brewery Exhibit at the Lewis and Clark Exposition in 1905 and left a bequest at his death.

**Description of Physical Appearance** The expansive wooded park features covered wooden picnic shelters and open picnic areas, playground areas, and trails which lead through the park and down to the beach along Budd Inlet. A hilly nature trail follows the shore of secluded Ellis Cove.

**Major Bibliographic References** Nicandri, David, Olympia's Forgotten Pioneers, State Capitol Historical Association, 1976. Blankenship, Mrs. George E. Early History of Thurston County, Washington, Olympia, 1914.

**PHOTOS**



**View of taken**  
**Photography Neg. No. (Roll No./Frame No.):**  
**Comments:**