

The Lake is Fake, but the Habitat is Real



Using picks and shovels, men dug out the seven-foot-deep Lake from flat farmland. Although it is artificial, the Lake provides a natural home for the many birds and animals that live and visit here.

Lullwater
Trail



Midwood
Trail



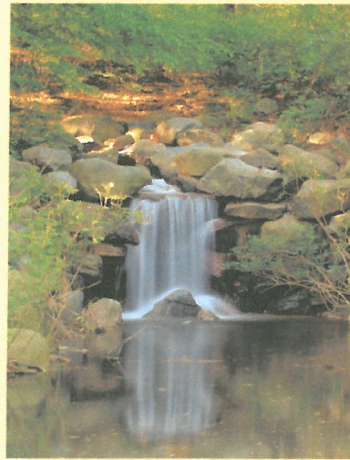
Peninsula
Trail



Waterfall
Trail



Historical photo of laborers constructing the Lake.



How do you fill up the Lake? Turn on the tap behind the waterfall!



Credit: Charlotte Zimmerman

The park water system starts at the Upper Falls across the Park, flows through the forest, widens into the Lullwater, then spreads out to fill the 50-acre Lake.



Credit: Steve Hanz

To the Great Blue Heron and other birds, it doesn't matter that the Lake is man-made — it's where they find food, shelter, and nesting places.

Tales the Landscape Tells



How has this area changed since the Park was built? The huge old trees give us clues: You can tell from their size and shape that they were planted in an open field more than a hundred years ago when the Park was new.

Lullwater
Trail



Midwood
Trail



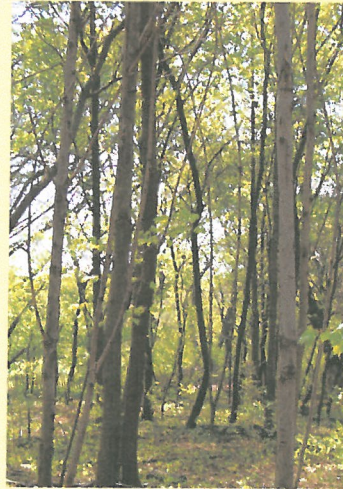
Peninsula
Trail



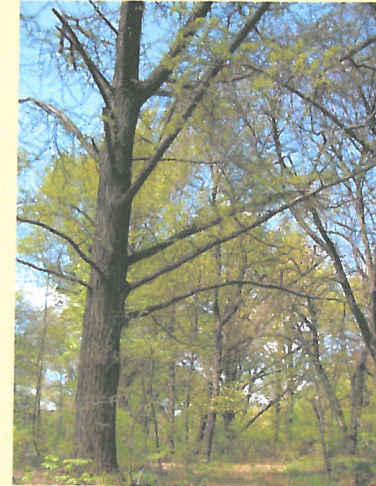
Waterfall
Trail



In the 1870s, the treeless peninsula reached into the Lake, which was newly carved from farmland.



A tree fighting for light in a crowded forest grows up toward the sun.



In a field, a tree reaches its branches out like open arms.



The many young trees tell us the land is changing again, growing back the forest that was there before the Park.



What will the land be like when this sapling is a full-grown tree?

From Forest to Field to Fishing Hole



Lullwater
Trail



Midwood
Trail



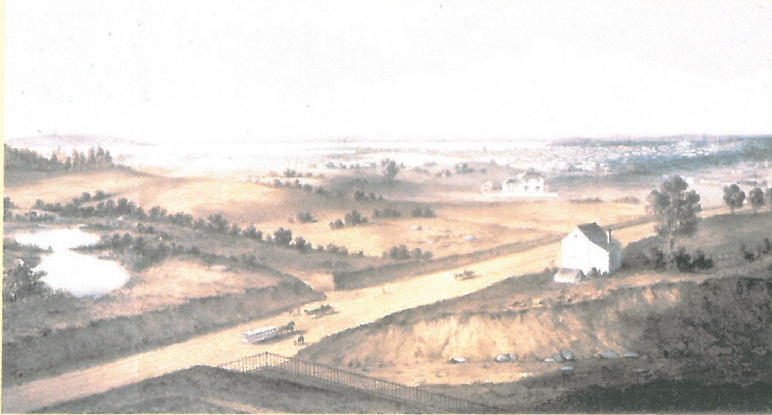
Peninsula
Trail



Waterfall
Trail



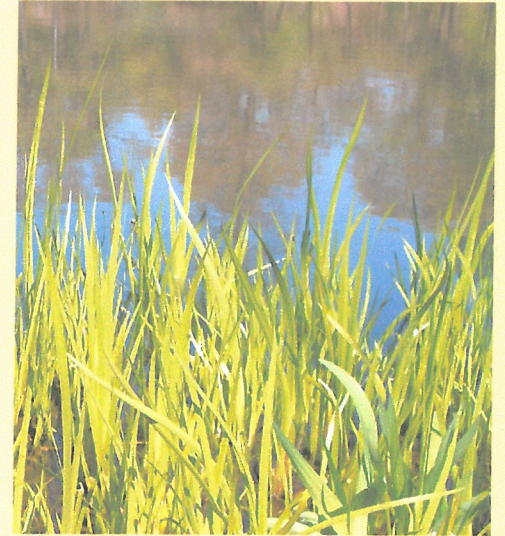
Stand on this spot and go back in time. Where waves now gently lap the shore, there were once fields of potatoes and other vegetables destined for tables in Manhattan. Before that, forests covered the land.



Forests once stretched across Brooklyn. Some of the last few remnants of the borough's original forests are in the Park. When the Dutch settled in Brooklyn in the 1600's, they cleared most of the woods for fields.



Local fisherman are challenged by a variety of fish such as Largemouth Bass and White Perch in this man-made fishing hole.



The new concrete beach lets you get close to the water without stepping on delicate plants along the shore.

The Terrace Bridge Revealed



Park architect Calvert Vaux designed the Terrace Bridge as a part of the landscape, but weeds grew up and hid it from view. Now the shores have been restored to the original design and the bridge can be admired again.

Lullwater
Trail



Midwood
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Peninsula
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Waterfall
Trail



Built of stone and steel in 1890, the Terrace Bridge was meant to be seen from this shore, from terraces that were never built.



By the 1990s, overgrown weeds hid most of the bridge.



Workers dug down six feet to pull out the deep roots of phragmites that filled in the lake edge.



Today the bridge can be seen gracefully by trees along the shore.



A Landscape Written Over Many Times



This area once had large beds of flowers and curving paths; then it became a meadow. Though a grand gathering place planned by the Park designers was never built, several other buildings have come and gone. Now people are restoring the forest that existed before the Park was built.

Lullwater
Trail



Midwood
Trail



Peninsula
Trail



Waterfall
Trail



Olmsted and Vaux designed a series of terraces and arcades here, called the Refractory, as a place for people to gather, eat, and rest.



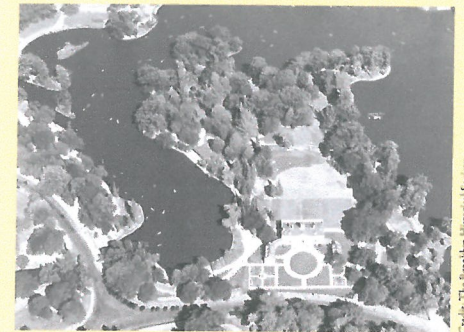
Historical photo of landscape.

Credit: Brooklyn Historical Society



Credit: Courtesy of Bob Lortz

For over fifty years, the Model Yacht Club House shown here was the launching spot for sailing boats on the lake. It burned down in 1956.



Credit: The Brooklyn Historical Society

If you were here in 1920, you would have seen a temporary replica of Mount Vernon, George Washington's Virginia home, set up to celebrate his 200th birthday.

