

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes
no

Property Name: Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook Inventory Number: AA-3

Address: 1920 Ritchie Highway (MD 450) Ritchie Highway median; south of Ritchie Road & north of the Naval Academy Bridge Historic district: yes no

City: Annapolis Zip Code: 21409 County: Anne Arundel

USGS Quadrangle(s): Annapolis

Property Owner: Maryland State Highway Administration Tax Account ID Number: 000

Tax Map Parcel Number(s): 000 Tax Map Number: 46

Project: MD 450 Landscape Sustainability - Ritchie Scenic Overlook Agency: Maryland State Highway Administration

Agency Prepared By: Maryland State Highway Administration

Preparer's Name: Matt Manning Date Prepared: 10/06/2012

Documentation is presented in: _____

Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: Eligibility recommended Eligibility not recommended

Criteria: A B C D Considerations: A B C D E F G

Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:

Name of the District/Property: _____

Inventory Number: _____ Eligible: yes no Listed: yes no

Site visit by MHT Staff yes no Name: _____ Date: _____

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

Description

The Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook occupies approximately 3.4 acres within the Ritchie Highway (MD 450) median. It is located in Anne Arundel County south of Ritchie Road and north of the Naval Academy Bridge that carries MD 450 over the Severn River. The site includes the Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook (1940), the Maryland World War II Memorial (1998), and a small memorial garden dedicated to three United States Naval Academy (USNA) Midshipmen who lost their lives along the highway (c. 1995).

Ritchie Highway is a four-lane divided highway that originates at the Baltimore city line and continues 41.4 miles southeast to the Severn River, just north of Annapolis. For the majority of its length, the highway continues along a straight northwest/southeast axis and includes a grass or concrete median of varying width. At the Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook, the highway curves southwest to cross the Severn River, and the median widens to approximately 170 feet. Here, the highway climbs to an elevation of 90 feet before descending to the river. The Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook is sited at the highway's apex, overlooking both the river and Annapolis to the south.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended Eligibility not recommended

Criteria: A B C D Considerations: A B C D E F G

MHT Comments:

John J. Lawrence
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

11/2/2012
Date

[Signature]
Reviewer, National Register Program

11/2/12
Date

The Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook is oriented on an approximately north-south axis between the highway's northbound and southbound lanes. It comprises a garden plaza and memorial plateau with an adjacent parking area. The Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook is accessed via an asphalt crossover between the highway's northbound and southbound lanes. South of the crossover is an asphalt parking area with space for approximately 18 cars around the perimeter. Two flagpoles, one holding the American flag and the other the Maryland state flag, stand within a landscaped island at the parking lot's center.

South of the parking area, the Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook is approached via seven low limestone steps that lead to a parterre garden plaza. The plaza is paved with rectangular slate in a random pattern. Four square planting beds, edged with limestone, occupy the plaza. Each bed holds a single willow oak surrounded by flowering perennials and an ornamental grass border. The four beds are arranged in a grid, forming a central north-south axis with an east-west cross-axis. A precast concrete bench, comprising a slab on two pedestals, occupies each end of the cross-axis. The slate paving continues around the plaza's edge, and metal post lights with single lanterns follow its perimeter. A mix of laurel and holly trees along the plaza's east and west sides screens it from the adjacent highway.

A wide limestone terrace with broad stone steps transitions from the plaza south to the overlook plateau, a semicircular limestone platform built into the hillside. The Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook's east, west, and south elevations are battered limestone walls of coursed ashlar construction with broken rangework. Like the plaza, holly and laurel screen the east and west elevation. A limestone cenotaph stands at the center of the overlook along the steps between the terrace and the plateau. It is oriented on a north-south axis and is approximately eight feet tall; its east and west elevations have a slight outward bow. The cenotaph resembles a pedestal without a surmounting column or statue. It rests on a tall plinth that rises from the base of the steps to above the plateau. Cyma base molding transitions between the plinth and a dado above; the sides of the dado feature wide, vertical reeding. A simple recessed cap crowns the cenotaph.

The cenotaph's northern face bears an inscription on the dado, which features a sculptural relief depicting the Calvert and Crossland coats of arms (the Maryland state flag) within a shield. Underneath are carved the words:

ALBERT • CABELL • RITCHIE

1876 – 1936

FOUR TIMES
GOVERNOR OF MARYLAND

HE WHO IS WORTHY OF
HONOR DOES NOT DIE

Above the shield, three carved horizontal bands crown the dado and terminate at the reeding on the sides. Identical bands are present on the dado's south face. Below the line, "Governor of Maryland," three tridents were later scratched into the stone. At some point, mortar was used in an attempt to fill and remove this graffiti.

Limestone paving follows a semicircular pattern around the plateau, emanating from the cenotaph. A semicircular limestone balustrade borders the plateau, which rises approximately 15 feet above the ground below. The balustrade includes stone panels alternated with sets of six oblong, reeded balusters. Graffiti, primarily names and initials, has been carved into the coping in many places. Like the cenotaph carving, some has been filled with mortar. Looking south from the overlook, the USNA and the

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Maryland State House in Annapolis are visible across the Severn River.

The Maryland World War II Memorial, also located in the MD 450 median, is visible below the overlook. The WWII Memorial comprises a ring of stone pillars around a sunken diamond-shaped amphitheater. Like the Overlook, the WWII Memorial has a view of Annapolis to the south. At the Memorial's north end, a star-shaped extruded column rises from a stone base. The five-pointed star formed by the top of the column is lighted at night. Two tall steel flagpoles flank the column. Low hedges planted to spell "WORLD WAR II" border the Memorial's south side. The WWII Memorial is reached by two concrete sidewalks that lead from the parking area along the Overlook's east and west sides. Lighted metal bollards line each of the walkways.

A third memorial is located at the southeast base of the Overlook. This memorial garden is dedicated to three USNA Midshipmen who were killed in a 1993 auto accident along the highway. It comprises a small circular concrete walkway bordered by a ring of boxwoods. A pair of crape myrtle trees at the walkway's north side marks the memorial entrance. Grass is planted within the walkway, and stone pavers are arranged in the form of a trident. Three small plaques on granite bases are arranged along the walkway's southeast side. Each plaque is dedicated to one of the Midshipmen. Like the other memorials, this one faces south; however, its view toward Annapolis is obscured by the WWII Memorial.

The Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook is located along a busy four-lane divided highway in a suburban residential area. Scattered trees and mid-twentieth-century single-family dwellings border both sides of the highway. W-beam guardrail abuts the median south of the Overlook along the highway's northbound and southbound lanes. Low bushes occupy the median adjacent to the guardrail. North of the Overlook and the MD 450 crossover is a secondary parking area comprising a mix of gravel and grass. Elsewhere, the median is planted with grass and scattered hardwood trees; no trees stand south of the WWII Memorial.

History/Context

The Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook was dedicated May 20, 1940 as the Governor Ritchie Memorial Plaza. The Overlook was constructed as part of the Ritchie Highway, a divided highway begun in 1934 and fully opened to traffic in 1939. The highway, stretching 41.4 miles in Anne Arundel County, replaced the meandering Baltimore-Annapolis Boulevard, reducing by half the travel time between the two cities.

The Ritchie Highway was the first dual highway in Maryland, planned concurrently with US 40 (Pulaski Highway) north of Baltimore. Both highways were conceived as naturally landscaped parkways, free of billboards and other commercial interests. Incorporation of natural, native plants was an important component of the Ritchie Highway. Unlike earlier highway projects in which all vegetation within the right-of-way was removed, select trees and plants along the highway and within what would become the median were retained. Garden clubs played an important role in promoting roadside beautification, holding landscaping contests between businesses and going door to door along the highway encouraging property owners to ornament their lots. Despite these efforts, Ritchie Highway quickly developed into a major commercial corridor that would include Maryland's first drive-in theater and the first enclosed shopping mall east of the Mississippi River. Later attempts, such as the 1950-54 Baltimore-Washington Parkway, proved more successful at restricting commercial intrusions.

Albert Cabell Ritchie, for whom the Ritchie Scenic Overlook and Ritchie Highway were named, was born in Richmond, Virginia, in 1876; his family moved to Baltimore shortly thereafter. He attended Johns Hopkins University and the University of Maryland School of Law, entering into practice in 1900. Ritchie's public service career began in 1910 when he was appointed People's Counsel to the Public Commission Service of Baltimore, where he fought for lower gas and electricity prices. He served as Attorney General of Maryland between 1915 and 1919, increasing efficiency by consolidating the state's legal services.

In 1920, Ritchie began his first of four terms as Maryland Governor, serving until 1935. During his tenure, Ritchie introduced

| MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| Criteria: | A | B | C | D | Considerations: | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | |
| MHT Comments: | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| _____ Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services | | | | | | | _____ Date | | | | | | |
| _____ Reviewer, National Register Program | | | | | | | _____ Date | | | | | | |

reforms to the Maryland school system, including educational standards and funding distribution. He oversaw extensive expansions and improvements to the state highway system, including a program of new highway and bridge construction. He reorganized the state government and updated Maryland's public health system. He promoted environmental conservation with the establishment of the State Conservation Department. Ritchie was defeated in his bid for a fifth term in 1935, and he returned to Baltimore to practice at the law firm he had established with Stuart S. Janney in 1903. He died February 24, 1936.

Calls for a Ritchie memorial began shortly after the former governor's death. A Ritchie Memorial Commission, headed by Ritchie's former law partner, Stuart Janney, was created by then Governor Harry W. Nice in 1936. Early memorial proposals included a bridge across the Chesapeake Bay; a new state office building, waterfront park, or statue in Annapolis; a statue in Baltimore; and a scholarship fund at Johns Hopkins University, Ritchie's alma mater. Ultimately, the overlook site along the Ritchie Highway was chosen. The memorial was selected for its broad appeal and relatively low cost (\$30,000); visibility and accessibility were also factors. The Ritchie Memorial Commission approved final plans for the memorial to Governor Ritchie in June 1938.

The design exhibited Classical architectural forms influenced by the Modern Movement. It is suggestive of Stripped Classicism, in which the moldings, ornament, and details of Classical architecture are removed, leaving only structure and proportion. The style was commonly incorporated in 1930s New Deal programs, including courthouse construction, and was used for other government buildings such as the San Francisco Mint (1937) and the Virginia State Library (1940). A 1938 Baltimore Sun article cited Francis Haynes Jencks and L. McLane Fisher as architects; later articles credited the firms Palmer & Lamdin and Wrenn, Lewis, & Jencks. The M.A. Long Company served as contractor, and local garden clubs participated in laying out formal plantings.

Palmer & Lamdin was formed by Edward L. Palmer, Jr., and William D. Lamdin. Early in his career, Palmer served as resident architect for the Roland Park Company. He partnered with Lamdin after 1920, and the firm designed many houses in the Baltimore neighborhoods of Roland Park, Guilford, and Homeland. In 1928, the firm was commissioned to design the new Baltimore City Hospitals, now part of Johns Hopkins Bayview. Constructed in the late 1920s and early 1930s, the state-of-the-art hospital buildings formed an Art Deco-style campus on Baltimore's east side. The firm also designed the Second Presbyterian Church in Guilford and the twin-domed St. Casimir Church in Baltimore's Canton neighborhood; however, it remains best known for its residential work, especially in the Guilford area.

Robert E. Lewis founded Wrenn, Lewis, and Jencks in 1927, and the firm was active until 1978. Like Palmer & Lamdin, the firm's early work involved residential architecture in Roland Park, Guilford, and Homewood. In 1936, they designed a building to house the Hopkins Club at Johns Hopkins University and soon became involved with the design or renovation of other buildings on campus and at the Hopkins hospitals. The Baltimore Museum of Art was also a repeat client. The firm did not work in a particular style, but based their designs on the needs of particular buildings or clients.

The Ritchie Scenic Overlook was dedicated May 20, 1940. Speakers at the dedication included Governor Herbert O'Connor and Chief Judge Carroll T. Bond, of the Maryland Court of Appeals. The Rev. Dr. Edward D. Johnson, of St. Anne's Episcopal Church in Annapolis, offered a prayer. Spectators parked diagonally along the shoulder of the highway's northbound lane, and gathered along the highway; many remained in their cars for the ceremony.

Newspaper accounts described the memorial as occupying a site 230 feet long by 100 feet wide within a 200-foot wide median between the highway's northbound and southbound lanes. The limestone overlook included a 60-foot wide semicircular stone platform preceded by a garden approximately 75 feet square. Landscaped areas, planted with laurel and holly, tied into the traffic lanes on each side; the garden contained rows of boxwoods donated by the Severn River Garden Club. Plans of the Maryland State Road Commission depict a small parking area north of the overlook that was accessed directly from the highway's northbound and

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southbound lanes.

Landscaping along Ritchie Highway was completed in April 1941; however, no detailed record of the Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook's original plantings is available. The landscaping at the Overlook has evolved and matured over time. New single-family residences appeared along both sides of the highway soon after its completion, and newspaper articles indicate that several area churches held Easter sunrise services at the Overlook during the 1950s and 60s. The highway has been widened several times; in 1994, the U.S. Naval Academy Bridge was erected over the Severn River, and the highway south of the Overlook was slightly realigned. After 1994, the Midshipmen memorial garden was added to the Overlook's southeast corner; in 1998, the Maryland WWII Memorial was constructed immediately south of the Overlook. Around this same time, the original parking area was reconfigured to limit access from the highway to a new crossover north of the parking lot. The former entrances along the parking area's east and west sides were closed and replaced with concrete curb.

Since 1998, the WWII Memorial has become the focus of the site and is listed first on highway directional signs. Other signs within the plaza gardens note plantings dedicated to the U.S. armed forces and prisoners of war. The WWII Memorial is prominently sited in the foreground of the Overlook viewshed, and its dual flagpoles partially obstruct the view over the river to Annapolis. For travelers approaching on MD 450 from the south, the Overlook is obscured behind the WWII Memorial. The WWII Memorial's hard granite pillars and sharp lines stand in stark contrast with the limestone, natural landscaping, and gentle terracing of the Ritchie Scenic Overlook.

Significance Evaluation

The Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook was evaluated for significance under the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Criteria A, B, and C.

The Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook is closely associated with the construction of the Ritchie Highway and early efforts in Maryland to create visually appealing, naturally landscaped highways. Its location overlooking Annapolis was an expression of the ideals driving the development of scenic parkways. However, Ritchie Highway itself more appropriately represents this association, and later highways such as the Baltimore-Washington Parkway were more successful in achieving the goal of highway beautification. The property is not associated with other events that have made a significant contribution to history and is not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A.

The Overlook commemorates Albert C. Ritchie, four-term governor of Maryland. According to Criterion Consideration F, a commemorative property must possess significance based on its own value, not on the value of the person being memorialized. Research did not identify other persons of local, state, or national significance associated with the structure, and the Overlook is not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B.

Designed by the architectural firms Palmer & Lamdin and Wrenn, Lewis, & Jencks, the Overlook exhibits Classical forms with Modern Movement influences, with features common to many interwar government buildings. The two firms are known for their dwellings in Baltimore and the surrounding area; the Overlook is not representative of their residential designs. Since its construction, additions and alterations to the Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook, particularly the placement of the WWII Memorial, have altered the original vista and obscured the Overlook from the road. As a result of these additions, the Overlook no longer retains its integrity of setting, feeling, or association. Therefore, the Overlook is not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C. The property was not evaluated under Criterion D as part of this assessment. Based on the evaluated Criteria, the Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook is not eligible for listing in the NRHP.

The property occupies approximately 3.4 acres within the Maryland State Highway Administration's right-of-way in the MD 450

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| Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services | | | | | | | | | | Date | | | |
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median, shown on Anne Arundel County Tax Map 46.

Works Consulted

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MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

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Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook (AA-3)

Anne Arundel County



USGS 7.5' Quadrangle - Annapolis
1:24,000





Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook

Crossover

Parking Area

SB Ritchie Highway (MD 450)

NB Ritchie Highway (MD 450)

Midshipmen Garden

WWII Memorial

To Annapolis



**Maryland State Highway Administration
Cultural Resources Section
Photo Log**

Project No.: AX197B21

Project Name: MD 450: Landscape Sustainability – Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook

MIHP No.: AA-3

MIHP Name: Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook

County: Anne Arundel

Photographer: M. Manning

Date: October 4, 2012

Ink and Paper Combination: Epson UltraChrome pigmented ink/Epson Premium Luster Photo Paper

CD/DVD: Verbatim, CD-R, Archival Gold

| Image File Name | Description of View |
|------------------------|---|
| AA-3_2012-10-04_01.tif | View south to entrance from MD 450 crossover |
| AA-3_2012-10-04_02.tif | Steps leading from parking area |
| AA-3_2012-10-04_03.tif | View north from overlook steps to parking area and entrance |
| AA-3_2012-10-04_04.tif | View south from parterre garden plaza |
| AA-3_2012-10-04_05.tif | View east within garden plaza |
| AA-3_2012-10-04_06.tif | View SE across overlook |
| AA-3_2012-10-04_07.tif | Cenotaph honoring Governor Ritchie |
| AA-3_2012-10-04_08.tif | Balustrade detail at NE corner of overlook plateau |
| AA-3_2012-10-04_09.tif | View west to cenotaph |
| AA-3_2012-10-04_10.tif | View north to garden plaza |
| AA-3_2012-10-04_11.tif | View south to Annapolis from overlook plateau |
| AA-3_2012-10-04_12.tif | View south from overlook; WWII memorial in foreground |
| AA-3_2012-10-04_13.tif | View SW from overlook to Naval Academy Bridge |
| AA-3_2012-10-04_14.tif | Detail; balustrade with graffiti |
| AA-3_2012-10-04_15.tif | Detail; cenotaph inscription |
| AA-3_2012-10-04_16.tif | View SW from MD 450 northbound; WWII memorial sidewalk and lights |
| AA-3_2012-10-04_17.tif | View south from WWII memorial |
| AA-3_2012-10-04_18.tif | Midshipmen memorial garden; view SE |
| AA-3_2012-10-04_19.tif | Overlook; south elevation |
| AA-3_2012-10-04_20.tif | View north from median to overlook; WWII memorial in foreground |
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AA-3

Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook

Anne Arundel Co MD

M. Manning

10/4/2012

MD SHPO

View south to entrance from MD 450 crossover

1/20



AA-3

Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook

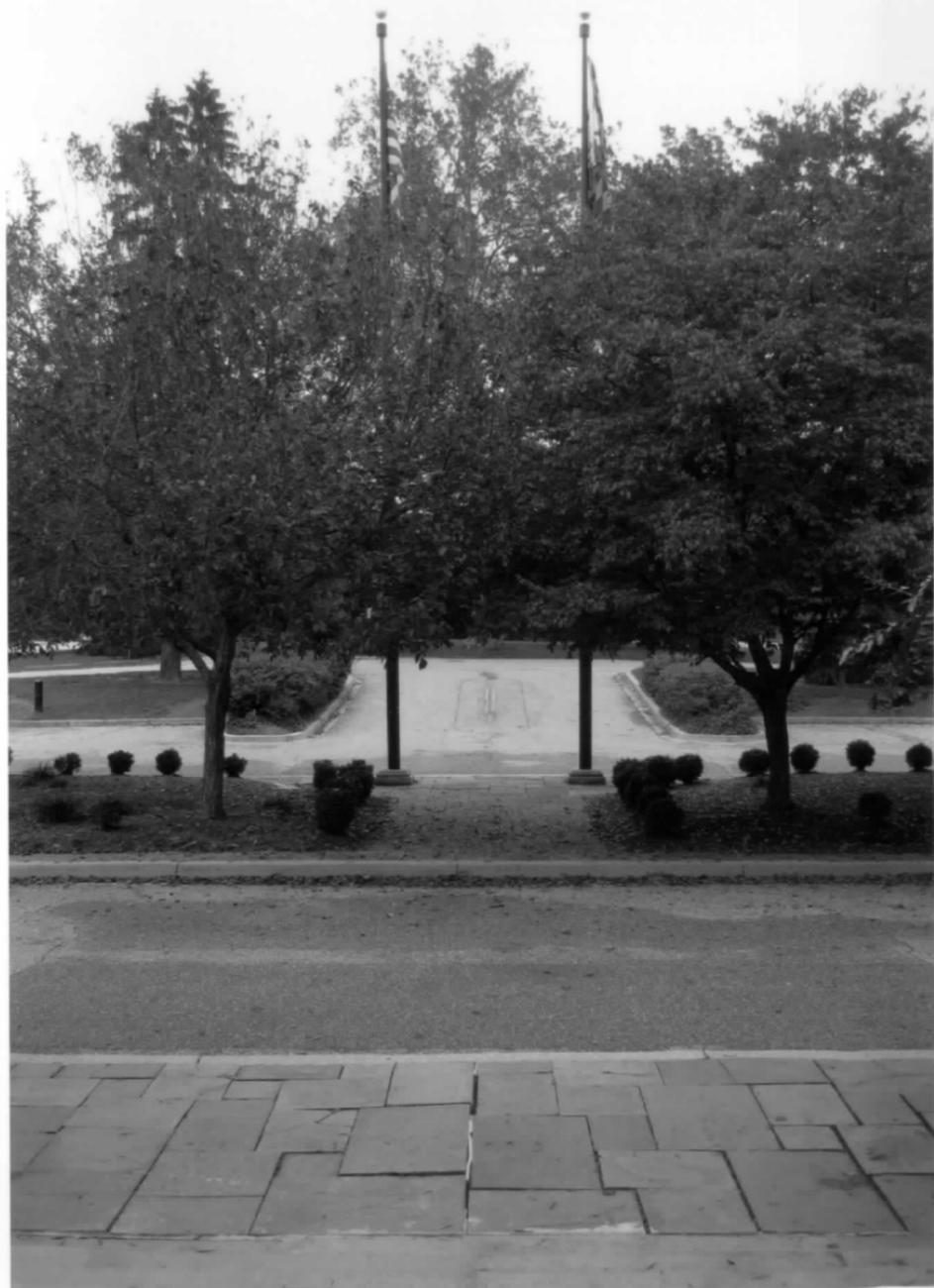
Anne Arundel Co. MD

M. Manning

10/4/2012

Steps leading south from parking area

2/20



AA-3

Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook

Anne Arundel Co. MD

M. Manning

10/4/2012

no steps

View north from Overlook steps to parking area & entrance

3/20



AA-3

Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook

Anne Arundel Co. MD

M. Manning

6/4/2012

no steps

View south from parterre garden plaza

4/20



AA-3

Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook

Anne Arundel Co. MD

M. Manning

10/4/2012

MD SHPO

View East w/in garden plaza

5/20



AA-3

Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook

Anne Arundel Co MD

M. Manning

10/4/2012

MD SHPO

View SE across overlook

6/20



ALBERT CABELL RITCHIE

1876 - 1936

TWO TIMES
GOVERNOR OF MARYLAND

HE WHO IS WORTHY OF
HONOR DOES NOT DIE



AA-3

Governor Ritchie Science Overlook

Annie Annabel Co MD

M. Manning

10/4/2012

MD SHPO

Cenotaph honoring Governor Ritchie

7/20



AA-3

Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook

Anne Arundel Co. MD

M. Manning

10/4/2012

MD SHPo

Balustrade detail at NE corner of overlook plateau

8/20



AA-3

Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook

Anne Arundel Co. MD

Mr. Manning

10/4/2012

MD SHPO

View west to cenotaph

9/20



AA-3

Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook

Anne Arundel Co MD

M. Manning

10/4/2012

MD SHPO

View north to garden plaza

10/20



AA-3

Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook

Anne Arundel Co. MD

W. Manning

10/4/2012

MD SHPO

View south to Annapolis from overlook plateau

4/20



AA-3

Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook

Anne Arundel Co. MD

M. Manning

10/4/2012

MD SHPO

View south from overlook; MD WWI Memorial in foreground

12/20



AA-3

Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook

Anne Arundel Co. MD

M. Manning

10/4/12

MO SHPO

View SW from overlook to Naval Academy Bridge

13/20



AA-3

Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook

Anne Arundel Co MD

M. Manning

10/4/2012

MD SHPO

Detail; balustrade with graffiti

14/2

AA-3

Governor Ritchie Science Outlook

Anne Arundel Co. MD

M. Manning

10/4/2012

no stop

Detail; cenotaph inscription

15/20



AA-3

Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook

Anne Arundel Co. MD

M. Manning

10/4/2012

MD SHPO

View SW from MD 450 northbound; WHITE Memorial
sidewalk and lights

16/20



AA-3

Governor Ritchie Science Overlook

Anne Arundel Co MD

M. Manning

10/4/2012

MD Steps

View south from WWI Memorial

12/20



AA-3

Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook

Anne Arundel Co MD

M. Manning

10/4/2022

MD SHPO

Midshipmen memorial garden; view SE

18/2



AA-3

Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook

Anne Arundel Co MD

M. Manning

10/4/2012

MD SHPO

Overlook; South elevation

19/20



AA-3

Governor Ritchie Scenic Overlook

Anne Arundel Co MD

McManning

10/4/2012

MD SHPO

View north from median to overlook; White Memorial
in foreground

20/20