

September 20, 2018

## **The Secret (a treasure hunt)**

**A novel by Byron Preiss**

**Proposed solution for Image #9 and Verse # 7 by**

**Darren Boutette**

### **I. Expedition Unknown S04E04 The Secret**

I watched the episode of “Expedition Unknown S04E04 The Secret” on the Discovery Channel that tells the story of an American author, Byron Preiss, who hid 12 items in major cities in North America then published a book giving clues in verses and paintings back in the 1980’s. Only two (2) of the items have been located publicly.

Ref: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T7pyMi9TiX8>

I was immediately hooked.

I found a copy of the book online and began my own analysis of the clues.

Ref: [http://thesecret.pbworks.com/w/file/69009390/The%20Secret\\_OCR.pdf](http://thesecret.pbworks.com/w/file/69009390/The%20Secret_OCR.pdf)

The two solved images and verses were:

Image 4 Verse 4 – Cleveland


Image 5 Verse 12 – Chicago

## II. Site #9: St. Louis

I began reviewing others' research into the remaining images and verses concentrating on the one in Montreal which was one of the few cities that I've actually visited.

1. Many current theories relate Image 9 as Montreal, Quebec, Canada due to the strong corresponding match between the image of the "Legeater Dog" and the lamp located in Montreal.

Ref: <http://thesecret.pbworks.com/w/page/22148559/FrontPage> - Image 9

Image 2		Verse 2	Montreal	October	Roman Numeral X (10)	Opal	Calendula	Netherlands
<b>Status:</b> Clues in Image 9 seem to direct the search toward Mount Royal and the "Golden Square Mile" neighborhood in Montreal. In particular, the "legeater dog" seems like a very specific detail to confirm the neighborhood. It would be difficult to dig in a crowded downtown location without being observed, so that might explain why this is the only puzzle that tells us to "get permission to dig out." But clues in Verse 5 seem to steer us more toward Saint Helen Island or Notre Dame Island in the Saint Lawrence river beside Montreal. Those places would have made it far easier for Preiss to dig without being observed, but they would also make it less clear why searchers should get permission before digging.								

The corolation is quite compelling.

Ref: <http://thesecret.pbworks.com/w/page/86302990/Image%2009> – Legeater Dog

The most distinctive feature of Image 9 is the "legeater dog" that appears in a golden rectangle on the man's shirt. The design closely matches the (bizarre) bases on the lampposts outside the [George Stephen House](#) located at 1440 Drummond Street, near the center of the Golden Square Mile. The house was built in 1883 for George Stephen, 1st Baron Mount Stephen. The lamps are an Italian design and very similar lamps are still in use in Palermo, Sicily. (See photos [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).) However, no other examples of this design have yet been found in North America.

Most landmarks in *The Secret* are deliberately modified and obscured in Palencar's images. The design of the lamppost base, however, is captured in unusual detail. Only one thing seems to have been changed: the nose of the animal has been lengthened to change it from a cat or some kind of goblin into a recognizable dog.





Photo by wiki user Deliah, our Montreal detective!

Initial investigation of the "Dogeater" lamp shows it isn't native to Montreal. Its origins are from Palermo, Italy. Having not seen another example in North America, the assumption continued.

But all the remaining clues pointing to Montreal are rather weak and even forced.

2. Occam's Razor - is the problem-solving principle that the simplest solution tends to be the right one. When presented with competing hypotheses to solve a problem, one should select the solution with the fewest assumptions.

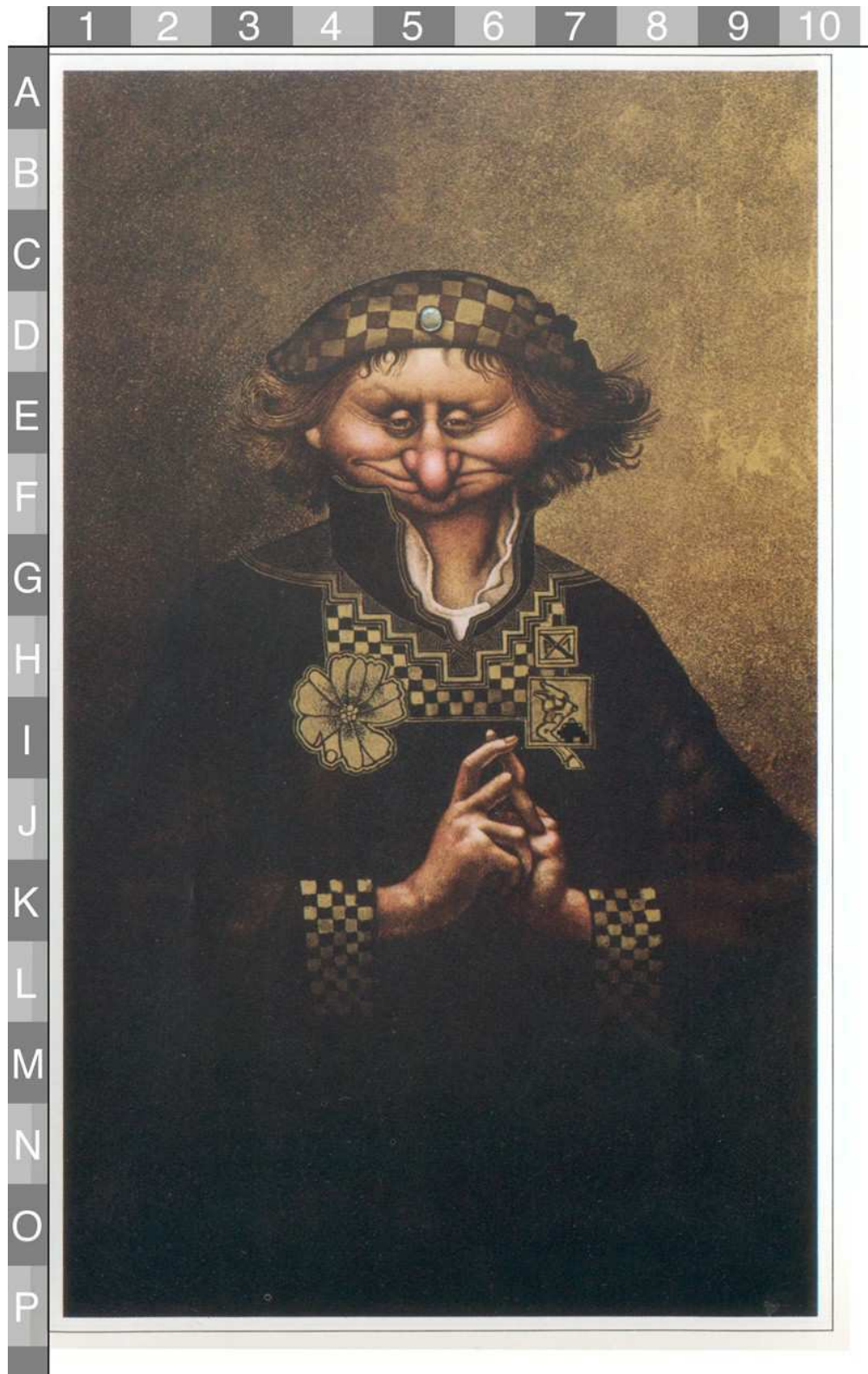
Ref: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occam%27s\\_razor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occam%27s_razor)

The author of *The Secret* expected the treasures to be found a few months after the book was published which lead me to believe the clues should be rather easy for anyone familiar with any of the locations (in the 1980's). Unfortunately, more than 35 years have passed since the book was published and many of the clues may no longer remain.

### 3. St. Louis, Missouri.

Using Occam's Razor, a cursory review of the image shows clues pointing to St. Louis, Missouri.

From Image 9:



- i) The St. Louis Blues emblem.

The most obvious clue is the musical note which is a match for the St. Louis Blues hockey team's emblem.



- ii) The St. Louis Blues Hockey team played in the St. Louis Arena called the "Checker Dome" due to the fact that the Purina pet food company which sponsored the Arena and owned the St. Louis Blues has a red and white checkered logo. This matched the checkered pattern found in the image including his checkered hat which also has a similar shape to the arena.



The checker dome was renamed in 1983, just two (2) years after the author had hidden his treasure. It was later demolished in 1999.





## St. Louis Arena

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

**St. Louis Arena** (known as the **Checkerdome** from 1977 to 1983) was an **indoor arena** located in St. Louis, Missouri, that stood from 1929 to 1999. It was home to the St. Louis Blues and various other sports franchises. The Arena was located directly across I-64 from Forest Park's Aviation Field.

The Arena was the site of conventions, concerts, political rallies, horse shows, circuses, boxing matches, Roller Derby competitions, indoor soccer matches, the 1973 and 1978 NCAA men's basketball Final Four, the NCAA Men's Midwest Regional finals in 1982, 1984, and 1993, the 1992–94 Missouri Valley Conference men's basketball tournament, and the 1975 NCAA Frozen Four ice hockey finals.

Ref: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St.\\_Louis\\_Arena](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Louis_Arena)

iii) The collar is quite a distinctive shape.

The white shirt collar could be the confluence of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers where the bottom shape is St. Louis. I'm still working on this one.



iv) The crossed lines of the tunic collar represent the conjoining of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers. In fact, the flag of St. Louis has two wavy lines conjoining to one line which is a representation of the two rivers coming together.



Ref: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flag\\_of\\_St.\\_Louis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flag_of_St._Louis)

v) The Nose

A nose that size has to be a clue but the only image that comes to mind is the Fleur-de-lis in the center of the St. Louis flag.





vi) The finger placement

Finger placement also appears to be a clue but the only image that comes to mind is the cross finger scepter that King Louis is often holding to represent the “hand of justice”.



- vii) Byron Preiss did an interview with the St. Louis Post-Dispatch in 1982 promoting his book *The Secret*.

Mon., Oct. 25, 1982

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

3D

## Elves And Trolls Bury Treasures, Get In Some Digs

**If you want to find the precious booty, you have to get "The Secret," which really is a book.**

By John J. Archibald  
Of the Post-Dispatch Staff

Byron Preiss said it's all well and good to publish a book for adults about Trolls and Leprechauns and Tree Fairies and such, and to put in some clues about where a dozen of the little peoples' precious jewels have been buried for smart readers to find, but...

"But somebody had to hide the jewels, and it wasn't easy," said Preiss. He developed and edited a Bantam Book called "The Secret," and now the New York resident is going around trying to draw attention to it.

"Off and on for nine months this year, I traveled this country and Canada, hiding the stuff. You can imagine what airport security people say to a man trying to carry a 6-foot shovel onto an airplane. I tried to convince them I was on a horticultural expedition."

"One time I almost got caught by police when I was burying one of the casks. I had to hide under a pile of leaves until they left. Another time, some dogs got in an uproar about me being around."

"I had other experiences, but describing them might give clues about where I was, so I can't talk. If a reader wants to consider the police and the dogs as clues, that's up to him or her."

The publishing of a book that includes obscure directions to an actual treasure fits in with a trend, apparently begun in 1978 by a British publisher who distributed a book titled "The Golden Hare of Masquerade." In it were clues to the location of a jewel-studded rabbit. "Masquerade" became an obsession with many Britons until the treasure was found in a London park three years later.

There are similar such treasure hunts going on in this country, but none promoted by a book company.

Among the other search projects are two games of the "Dungeons and Dragons" type—"Treasure of the Unicorn Gold" and "Treasure of the Silver Dragon"—which include hints as to the location of valuables. The games are distributed by Metagaming of Austin, Texas.

A calendar distributed by Chrysler Corp. contains puzzles that, if solved, can lead to college scholarships.



Renold Ferguson/Post-Dispatch  
Byron Preiss, editor of "The Secret," which contains clues to a treasure. Preiss holds a cask similar to the ones buried. Under his arm is a Djinn Rummy.

### THE VERSES



At the place where jewels abound  
Fifteen rows down to the ground  
In the middle of twenty-one  
From end to end  
Only three stand watch  
As the sound of friends  
Fills the afternoon hours  
Here is a sovereign people  
Who build palaces to shelter  
Their heads for a night!  
Gnomes admire  
Fays delight  
The namesakes meeting  
Near this site.

One of 12 poems in the book that, when matched with the correct drawing, will indicate the location of a precious jewel.

"The jewels described in 'The Treasure' are a peace offering from The Fair People," Preiss said in all seriousness. "They are the Elves and Trolls and Rhine Maidens and others—12 groups in all—who fled from the Old World, when civilization began to encumber them."

"They migrated to the New World and encountered the Indians, whom they liked, because the Indians had a great respect for nature. But 300 years later, the New World was 'discovered' and pretty soon the newcomers began to crowd the Fair People again."

"They have nowhere to go, so they have offered jewels in exchange for the right to live beside Man peacefully." Preiss spoke so earnestly that I became a believer. But why had the Fair People let the Bantam Co. hide the precious stones?

"They trust us," Preiss said, "because we have told their story honestly. We're the mediators, sort of, between the Fair People and Man."

I understood completely. The actual jewels are not buried, by the way. What the clever hunter will

find concealed not more than 3 feet below ground is a fancy cask about 8 inches long that contains a key. When the key is mailed to Bantam, the jewel will be sent in return. At least one gem is situated "within reasonable driving distance" of all residents of the United States and Canada, according to Preiss. The total value of the stones is estimated at \$10,000, but they are not equal.

"The stones that are worth the most will be the hardest to find," Preiss said. It's a rule you would expect from a group that calls itself the Fair People.

Only part of "The Treasure" is concerned about the history of the strange little folk and their clues. Much of the volume describes the activities of the creatures who evolved from the intermarriage of the various tribes of Fair People. You've encountered some of them.

A group that flourished in the recent baseball season is known as the Team Spirits.

"Although invisible, Team Spirits can influence the outcome of most sports events," states the Fair People



This may or may not be the sketch that matches the poem at left.

Guide. "They can nudge a knuckleball over the corner of the plate, and by spreading their wings and lowering their flaps, transform an arrogant pitcher's fastball into a hanging curve."

"They are most noticeable by their absence: It is invariably observed that a losing or strife-torn team 'lost its Team Spirit.'"

Another hybrid is known as the Elf S. Presley. He accompanies show-biz folk on the road.

"The sequel of feedback, the off-key plunk of a guitar string snapping, a dead mike during a vocal; all these misfortunes may usually be attributed to the tireless efforts of Elf S. Presley," according to the guide.

And anywhere the urge to push your luck burns a hole in your soul, the guide warns, you will find Daemon Runyon, the low roller's companion.

"He draws your attention to a sure-thing longshot in the Racing Form—where he has previously inserted a typo. He helps you draw to an inside straight if somebody else is holding a flush. He lets you win from welshers and lose to Mafia dons."

There's one particular hybrid, warns

the guide, to be alert for in the Midwest: The Spirit of St. Louis (Latin name: *Babbit redux*).

"The dauntless Charles Lindbergh, in a craft named after this creature, flew solo to France, beheld the splendors of ancient culture and gay Paris, went back home, and declared himself an isolationist. That's the Spirit of St. Louis at work for you, fellah."

"Much otherwise inexplicable American behavior is the work of this being. The Spirit of St. Louis inspires us

to celebrate with bands and bunting a previous (successful) revolution in politics and morality, while jailing, or at least ostracizing, anyone advocating political or moral change in the present..."

The authors of the lavishly and hilariously illustrated book, by the way, were Sean Kelly and Ted Mann, both Canadians. Kelly's past includes a term as editor of the National Lampoon, and Mann is the current senior editor of that publication.

Preiss, the editor, grew up in Brooklyn and is a graduate of Stanford University's Graduate School of Communications.

They warn us of countless other terrifying forms taken by the descendants of the original Fair People. The Tupperwerewolves (*tedium domesticum*, for instance).

Or the Werner Von Brownie — "which you will find wherever you see a red-faced power company public relations executive holding a Geiger counter with a melted probe, talking in reassuring terms about acceptable levels of radiation while spitting out her teeth."

Or the Djinn Rummy, found wherever less-than-fine wines are sold. The guide explains that "the Djinn (pronounced 'gin') has a great and famous power. It can take away three wishes from whoever is lucky enough to find it: the wish for a job, clean clothes and a place to sleep."

And the Philharmonic Orc. "He," the guide explains, "is the moving spirit behind the granting of vast sums of public money to subsidize art forms which are patronized largely by persons with vast private wealth. If music be the food of love, the Philharmonic Orc is providing food stamps for the upper class."

There's a lot of love among the Fair People. It just doesn't show.

Of course the image and the verse in the article don't correspond to St. Louis.

#### 4. Forest Park

- i) Forest Park seemed like an obvious choice to hide a treasure.

First, it's the largest urban park in any city in America. Second, it's the site of many historic events including the 1904 World's Fair also known as the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, and the 1904 Summer Olympics. It is known as the "Heart of St. Louis".

Ref: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forest\\_Park\\_\(St.\\_Louis\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forest_Park_(St._Louis))

- ii) The "Checker Dome" was located directly across from Forest Park.



iii) The Jewel Box



This seems like a too obvious clue but then its specifically mentioned in different verses. And the stepped shape appears in the pattern of the tunic.

- iv) The 12 petals on the flower corresponding to the old Korean War Memorial Floral Clock in Forest Park.



 alamy stock photo

DE1W74  
www.alamy.com

### **III. Verse #7: St. Louis**

#### ***Verse #7***

At stone wall's door  
The air smells sweet  
Not far away  
High posts are three  
Education and Justice  
For all to see  
Sounds from the sky  
Near ace is high  
Running north, but first across  
In jewel's direction  
Is an object  
Of Twain's attention  
Giant pole  
Giant step  
To the place  
The casque is kept.



***Meaning:***

1. At stone wall's door, The air smells sweet

Vendeventer Place Gate

2. Not far away, High posts are three

The Highlands Golf & Tennis Center, most commonly occur are par 3 holes

3. Education and Justice, for all to see

Golf "Course" and Tennis "Court"

4. Sounds from the sky, Near ace is high

Ace is a hole in one in golf and an unreturned serve in tennis

5. Running north, but first across, In jewel's direction

Go west first towards The Jewel Box greenhouse

6. Is an object, Of Twain's attention

The old Korean War Memorial, a floral clock in disrepair

7. Giant pole, Giant step

The old Korean War Memorial had a single flag pole. Take one giant step north.

8. To the place, The casque is kept.

In the garden plot just north of the Korean War Memorial a giant step from the flag pole.

## ***Explanation:***

### 1. Vendeventer Place Gate

The Vendeventer Place Gate was relocated to the Forest Park in 1947.

Ref: <http://www.forestparkstatues.org/vandeventer-place-gates/>



## 2. Golf and Tennis Center

The Highlands Golf and Tennis Center, formerly known as Triple A Golf and Tennis Club, opened in 1897 on the site of the current Forest Park Golf Course; in 1902, the course moved to a 70-acre (280,000 m<sup>2</sup>) facility near the southeast corner of Forest Park due to the construction of the 1904 World's Fair.<sup>[61]</sup> The new facility included a nine-hole golf course, tennis, handball and volleyball courts, a running track, and baseball and lacrosse fields.<sup>[61]</sup> The tennis courts at the Highlands were where player [Jimmy Connors](#) began his career, and the facility hosted [Davis Cup](#) qualifying matches in 1927, 1946, and 1961.<sup>[61]</sup> [Judy Rankin](#) began her golfing career at Triple A Golf and Tennis Club as a young girl. Between 2008 and 2010 the Highlands underwent a complete reconstruction, with a new nine-hole golf course, the installation of clay tennis courts, a new 30-stall lit [driving range](#), and the construction of a full-service bar and restaurant known as Keagan's Pub and Patio

Ref: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forest\\_Park\\_\(St.\\_Louis\)#Highlands\\_Golf\\_and\\_Tennis\\_Center](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forest_Park_(St._Louis)#Highlands_Golf_and_Tennis_Center)

## 3. Education and Justice, for all to see

Golf "Course" and Tennis "Court"

## 4. Sounds from the sky, Near ace is high

Ace is a hole in one in golf and an unreturned serve in tennis

## 5. Running north, but first across, In jewel's direction

Go west first towards The Jewel Box greenhouse

## 6. Mark Twain

Mark Twain was born in Florida, Missouri not far from St. Louis.

Mark Twain seemed to have a fascination with timepieces, watches, and clocks.

In many of his essays and letters he would address them as having some sort of human traits or being alive only to vex him in some sort of way.

### i) Letter to Henry H. Rogers, 24 September, 1894

I have damaged my intellect trying to imagine why a man should want to invent a repeating clock, and how another man could be found to lust after it and buy it. The man who can guess these riddles is far on the way to guess why the human race was invented -- which is another riddle which tires me.

- Letter to Henry H. Rogers, 24 September 1894

### ii) MY WATCH -- AN INSTRUCTIVE LITTLE TALE, The Galaxy, December 1870

This specifically applies to the clue.

#### "My Watch: An Instructive Little Tale"

In Mark Twain's "My Watch: An Instructive Little Tale" I found the author's thesis to be that once things go awry, they'll never work right again. Mr. Twain explains this through a personal narrative in which he recollects numerous times he had tried to get a broken watch repaired, and after many attempts, the watch ceased to work properly. Mr. Twain also states that his uncle William told him "A good horse was a good horse until it had run away, and that a good watch was a good watch until the repairers got a change at it."

In 1981, the Korean War Memorial would have been a floral clock that had deteriorated resulting in mechanical problems.



The large sundial adjacent to the Jewel Box is pictured at the left. The following description of it is taken from a brochure published by the St. Louis Department of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry: "Korean War Memorial. Sundial designed by Mel Meyer, SM. Installed in 1989. Stainless steel. In 1951, a floral clock was installed in Forest Park near the Jewel Box as a memorial for those who served during the Korean War. Deterioration and mechanical problems caused that memorial to be decommissioned in 1985 [see picture below]. A new memorial, an eight-foot stainless steel sundial, was designed to replace it. The new memorial was surrounded by plantings of viburnum, ivy, and

barberry." The picture at the right of the floral clock that was replaced in 1951 appears on page 218 in the 1986 book *Forest Park* by Laughlin & Anderson (Missouri History Museum Library, STL 711 F76L). The caption with the picture is "The floral clock in the Jewel Box gardens. Below the clock, flowers formed the inscription 'Hours and flowers soon fade away.' "



The photograph of this Korean War Memorial sundial was taken on May 29, 2000 at 3:30 p.m. CDT. The height of the gnomon is 85 inches, and the length of the gnomon's base is 106 inches, so an arctangent calculation has the gnomon inclining  $38.7^\circ$  to the its base. The width of the gnomon is 3.5 inches.

This nonfunctioning floral clock represents Twain's attention.

Ref: <http://www.forestparkstatues.org/korean-war-memorial/>



August 28, 1987

A Publisher Extra Newspaper

**St. Louis Post-Dispatch from St. Louis, Missouri · Page 14**

Publicati... St. Louis Post-Dispatch ⓘ

Article from the St. Louis Post-Dispatch dated August 28, 1987 showing the Korean War Memorial Clock in the picture in a state of disrepair. Byline says "Restoration Drive Begun for War Memorial".



Giant pole, Giant step

The old Korean War Memorial had a single flag pole. Take one giant step north.



OK, this is funny...



X marks the spot... between the flag and the 7 shrubs.



To the place, The casque is kept.

In the garden plot just north of the Korean War Memorial a giant step from the flag pole.

Here's lies the issue. In 1989, the floral clock which had deteriorated and damaged by vandals was replaced with the current 10-foot tall stainless steel working sundial. The surrounding garden and trees would likely have been removed and replanted after the installation which had most likely destroyed the casque or buried it.

A survey of the area would need to be performed to determine if any remains exist.

Further investigation at the time of construction may provide further possible areas to survey.

Ref: <http://www.forestparkstatues.org/korean-war-memorial/>

