



Memoriam Everlasting

A Resource Guide for the Maintenance and Preservation of Rural and
Privately Owned Historic Cemeteries

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Introduction

When I was a child, my grandmother, great- aunt, mother, and I would pile in the car surrounded by a mountain of flowers. We would then spend the full day driving from cemetery to cemetery, with occasional snack breaks, placing these flowers on every headstone we could possibly find which belonged to a possible ancestor. It did not matter how far removed this relation was, we still decorated the grave. Typically, one day was not enough for this journey, and we would spend a few weekends leading up to Memorial Day in this fashion. Today, my mother and I still continue the tradition, trying to find additional graves each year. Many of the cemeteries we visit are in poor condition, and this process has become more difficult, and the monuments have continued to weather. In my adult life, this yearly journey has inspired me to pursue a degree in Historic Preservation. This Master's Thesis is the culmination of my Preservation education, and I could not think of a better topic than cemetery preservation. I hope that this guide will provide a starting point for others with a similar passion, and that through their preservation efforts, the departed will not be forgotten.

Cemetery History

Before researching your particular cemetery, it is helpful to know the trends in cemetery history which have allowed your cemetery to exist. Over the past 400 years, cemetery design in America has changed dramatically. This is due to many factors, including health concerns, urban growth, societal trends, cultural trends, and changes in the cemetery industry. This section will give an overview of the history of the American cemetery as it relates to midwestern rural cemeteries. This section will also touch on the current trends in cemetery development. These trends will explain the current conditions of historic, rural midwestern cemeteries, including what can be done in order to preserve and maintain historic cemeteries.

American Cemetery Beginnings

The first cemeteries in America were typically found in churchyards. These were often designed very similarly to their predecessors in Europe, and included the cultural traditions of burial as well. During this time, most graveyard segregations were on the basis of class, with family plots grouped together. In the churchyard, burials located to the south of the church were often the most prominent, because this side received the most sunlight and was typically the most visible upon entry to the church. Conversely, the north yard of the church was the least desirable burial place, sometimes reserved for the “undesirables” of the church. As this plot of land was consecrated by the leader of the church, the ground was considered to be holy and only those who fit into the religion could be buried there. This may have contributed to the popularity of home burials, which will be discussed in the next section.



Old Bethel Church Graveyard, Located in Bethel, Ohio
Taken from: <http://clermontsun.com/2013/05/17/memorial-day-services-to-be-held-at-the-old-bethel-methodist-church/>

As the church was often the center of the community in colonial America, the churchyard became a sort of meeting place. Markets, malls, festivals, and games were frequently held, some of which became quite rough, sometimes even resulting in death. “We can readily understand how the graveyard was liable to desecration by the boisterous churls, who played their rough games, dancing, fighting and drinking on the hallowed spot.”¹ This idea leads into the future of cemeteries as a public park, since this purpose was served from the beginning. This also seems to be the beginning of cemetery vandalism, when headstones were often knocked over, or otherwise damaged, in the process.

¹ Puckle 1926, 144

Headstones themselves were often very morbid during this time period. The images depicted on them were often symbols of warning of an impending death such as “death’s heads (skulls) and crossbones; scythes and hour glasses; angels, with rather a diabolical expression; all seeing eyes, with ominous squint” and the inscriptions were equally ominous:



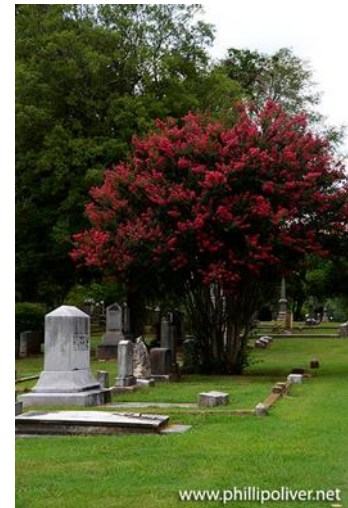
Death’s head and bones and “diabolical” angel headstone, located in St. Phillips Episcopal Church Cemetery, Charleston, South Carolina
Taken from:
<http://www.historytrekkershoppe.com/Haunts/Graveyards-and-Cemeteries/i-k6w9sRS>

*Thou traveler that passest by,
As thou art now, so once was I
As I am now, thou soon shall be,
Prepare for death and follow me.²*

These expressions seem to have come from a superstitious fear of death. This fear seems to bring with it a dread of places of burial, as well as a fear of disturbing the dead. These fears can be seen in the burial traditions of churchyards also, as already noted in the burial of “unholy” outside of the churchyard.

This superstition most likely originates from the Christian idea of resurrection, in that the bodies were seen as being kept until the day of resurrection, on which they would rise from their graves. This is seen in particular in Jewish cemeteries, which will be discussed in a later section, but has some traditions in all early churchyard cemeteries. Because of this, bodies were buried with their head facing west and feet facing east. This tradition can also be seen as a remnant of Pagan sun worship, due to the bodies greeting the rising sun.

Another form of paganism which has made its way into colonial graveyards is the use of trees. Trees were seen as very important in early graveyards due to the belief that anything which grows in holy land is holy in its own right. Certain trees also held symbolic meaning; like the willow and myrtle trees being a sign for resurrection and the palm tree as victory over death. Trees in graveyards also helped to protect the church from the elements, providing shade and a buffer for winds and precipitation. Most importantly, trees helped to purify the often rancid air of the graveyard.



Example of Myrtle Tree in Florence Cemetery, Florence, Kentucky

² Ferrell 1980, 103

Health issues were of major concern in early graveyards. As the cities grew in both population and size, graveyards often became overcrowded with no room for expansion. Because of this, it was common for graves to be disinterred in order to accommodate more bodies. Bodies were frequently buried two or three deep, “heaped... upon each other with a cold, calculating parsimony.”³ This made the graves much less personal, and the living cared less to visit them. These issues, combined with relatively shallow graves and poor soil conditions, led to bodies frequently surfacing in colonial graveyards. In the age of free range cattle, it was a requirement that these cemeteries must be fenced in to avoid animal grazing. It was a common belief during this time that cemeteries were full of “miasmatic vapors” generated by the decay of the dead which could have a negative impact on the living. Early settlements were also frequently founded near a water source, which was typically near the graveyard as the center of the community. Poor air quality and contaminated water most likely contributed to the superstitions surrounding graveyards, given the possibility that visiting them could make a person sick. All of these issues combined to create a need for a new form of cemetery. This began with the rural cemetery, which will be discussed shortly.

³ Ferrell 1980, 103

Home Burial in America

Home burial in the United States originated as an alternative to churchyard burial. As previously mentioned, churchyards only allowed for burial of those who were within the realms of the faith. Because of this, there were individuals who could not be buried within the walls, including those who committed suicide and sometimes women who died in childbirth. While many were simply buried outside of the walls, some were buried on their own property instead. This is



Lindsay Family Cemetery, located in Dearborn County, Indiana

Taken From: <https://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=cr&CRid=2140927>

also true of those who lived in extremely rural areas, since there would not have been a church near enough for transport of remains.

These private cemeteries were typically very small and formal in plan. More are located along roadsides, which allowed the coffin to be carried by wagon for at least a part of the distance. Others were located in the gardens or orchard of a property. These types of burial sites were also common on large estates, once again for the convenience factor, but also as a sense of pride in the family name. While these were more common on the southern plantations, there are many examples in the Midwest as well.



Vance Family Cemetery, Brown County Ohio

Taken from: personal photos

Again, trees were very important in these types of burial grounds; however, they frequently take the form of box or cypress bushes which were often planted behind the headstone. Over the years, these bushes have grown into large trees, causing damage to the stones they originally accented.⁴ Every one of these cemeteries started out with a single burial of the immediate family of the property owner. However, as more members of the family died, these properties grew, including more distant relatives and neighbors. For example, in the Vance family cemetery, located in Brown County, Ohio, there are 67 known internments including eleven surnames⁵. One of these surnames is Robbins who were related by multiple

⁴ Jones 1967, 189

⁵ Coletta and Puckett 1963, 338-340

marriages through the Shockey family to the Vances.⁶ Others, still only contain one or two headstones. These small, privately owned family cemeteries often present specific preservation challenges that other cemeteries do not possess. Because of this, they are being lost and damaged in much higher numbers than larger or more prominent cemeteries. I will discuss this further in my final section on preservation of cemeteries. While still occasionally practiced today, home burial has fallen to the wayside with the introduction of municipal cemeteries, discussed in the next section.

⁶ Mary Shockey married a Vance and Sarah Robbins married a Shockey. Known from personal family history.

Rural American Cemeteries

Cemeteries began to change in the beginning of the nineteenth century. Changes in society overall influenced this new form of cemetery. “Rapid urban growth and population mobility, booming business and commercial ventures, aggregations of surplus wealth, concentration of educated and public-spirited people, revisions of religious doctrines, Romantic affection for Nature- all combined to create a context in which the rural cemetery was a logical alternative to the burial places of an earlier era.”⁷ As cemetery overcrowding reached its limits, new cemeteries were founded on the outskirts of towns. Here, there were still large acreages available for purchase, made accessible when roads became more common. These cemeteries began to be municipally owned and operated, ridding them of the religious protocol for internment.

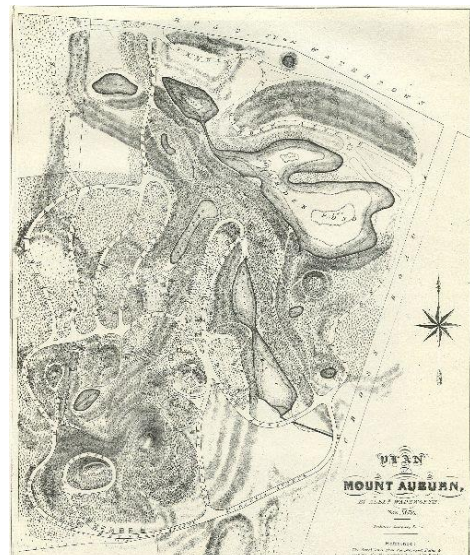


Tree lined avenue at Cimetiere du Pere-Lachaise in Paris, France

Taken from:

<http://www.parisparcours.com/place/100222/35/pere-lachaise-cemetery>

The movement towards this new form of cemetery is typically believed to be inspired by the Cimetiere du Pere-Lachaise in Paris. In 1780, the wall to the former cemetery of Paris, Cimetiere des Innocents, collapsed, spilling remains into the adjacent property, after decades of buildup and reuse. This gave the idea for a new form of cemetery, established in 1804.⁸ The Pere-Lachaise is the first municipal cemetery in the world, as well as the first garden cemetery. This cemetery was located to the east of Paris and situated on a hillside. It contains winding, tree lined avenues and grandly designed grave markers. Many Americans visited the cemetery and were inspired to create similar locations in America. Today the Pere-Lachaise contains over one million graves, proving just how successful this movement was.



Plan of Mount Auburn Cemetery

Taken from:

http://ancestorsatrest.com/cemetery_records/mount_auburn_cemetery.shtm

⁷ Ferrell 1980, 101-102

⁸ Bachelor 1955, 11



Rolling, planned landscape of Mount Auburn Cemetery, Boston

Taken From:

<https://bosguy.com/2014/06/26/mount-auburn-cemetery/>



Postcard of Spring Hill Cemetery, Vermilion County, Illinois

Taken from:

<http://www.usgwarchives.net/il/vermilion/postcards/ppcs-verm.html>



Green Mount Cemetery, Belleville, Illinois

Taken From:

<http://www.greenmountcemetery-belleville.com/green-mount-cemetery-belleville-faq.htm>

18,000 to 61,392 between 1790 and 1830- the year Mount Auburn opened.⁹ His botany background also made it natural that he would like a garden setting for his new cemetery. The original lots were to be no less than 200 square feet, belonging to the subscribers and their descendants in perpetuity. The site was four miles west of the city, on a hilltop overlooking the Charles River. This location decreased the risk of disease spread and protected against desecration and relocation of graves. This was a refreshing change to previous cemetery forms. The surrounding of plots with beautiful, planned natural and monumental features created a new aesthetic sentiment for cemeteries which continues to this day.¹⁰

This aesthetic followed the popular landscape plan of the day, combining the Picturesque and the Sublime. Here the individual could “commune with God, with nature, and with the deceased family and friends.”¹¹ This was a new theme in cemeteries, moving away from the morbidity and foreboding of earlier graveyards. New inscriptions were much more positive:

*Autumn's leaves shall fall and wither
On the spot where thou shalt rest;
'Tis in love we bear thee thither
To thy mourning Mother's breast.*¹²

This also led to new forms of monument decoration, turning away from religious iconography and symbols of death towards nature and symbols of everlasting life. In addition to the above-mentioned trees, this took the form of flowers to represent purity, lambs to represent innocence, and images of young idealized forms of female mourners.¹³

This return to nature also allowed for the promotion of the “natural” benefits of earth burial, as

⁹ Ferrell 1980, 102

¹⁰ Ferrell 1980, 100-107

¹¹ Ferrell 1980, 105

¹² Mount Auburn Cemetery 1839, 100

¹³ Bower 2004

opposed to tomb burial which was often ineffectual in preventing the decay of the body. This is the beginning of the modern concept of the biblical text “Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.”¹⁴ allowing for the body to decompose naturally in the earth and become fertilizer for the surrounding fauna. Another new theme of the rural cemetery is the idea of a grave being a home in which the deceased may rest. Familial organization became the main divider for rural cemeteries. This was followed secondly by ethnic and class distinctions.

In the Midwest, the rural cemetery form is most notable in the Greenmount and Spring Hill cemeteries, both located in Illinois. Spring Hill replaced the Old Williams Burying Ground in 1864, encompassing 40 acres in Vermilion County. It is still an active cemetery and contains approximately 10,500 graves.¹⁵ Greenmount is located east of Belleville in Saint Clair County. Founded in 1873, it sits on 150 acres of wooded hilltop overlooking an agricultural valley. It is also still an active cemetery.¹⁶ Both locations received an annual 30,000 visitors in the early years of their creation. These visitation rates allude to the new ideal of cemeteries being public park spaces to be used for recreation instead of just visiting the dead. This idea is more played out in the Lawn Cemetery, as will be discussed in the next section. This idea also led to the park movement in general, with the idea for Central Park having roots in Andrew Jackson Downing’s discussions of Mount Auburn Cemetery.

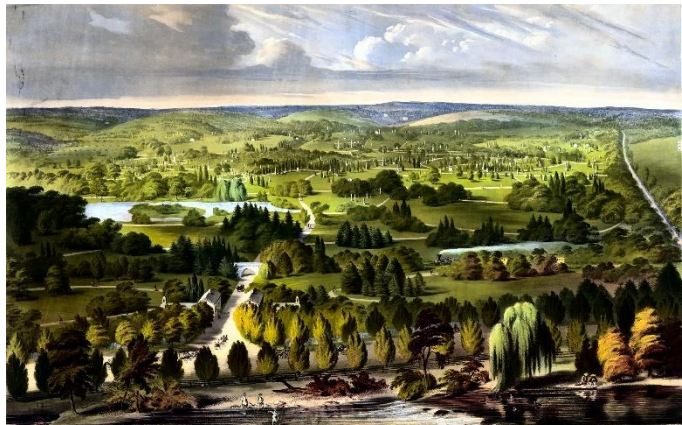
¹⁴ GEN 3:19 (KJV)

¹⁵ Vermilion County Info

¹⁶ Green Mount Cemetery- Belleville

American Lawn Cemeteries

From 1855 to 1920 cemeteries took on a new style which is commonly referred to as the lawn or park cemetery. The success of the rural cemetery gave rise to the movement for public parks and landscape architecture, which both in turn then shaped cemeteries. The same stylistic emphases that were developed in these parks began to be developed in cemetery design. This can be attributed to the increases in productivity of the American worker, as organization, mechanization, and expansion of industry allowed wages to rise more quickly than prices. This meant that Americans now had more money to spend on commodities and services. When the funeral services began to capitalize on these consumptive tendencies, they began to look for new ways to draw the people into their cemetery. This led to the professionalization of the industry with the creation of funeral direction and cemetery superintendent organizations in 1862 and 1887, respectively.¹⁷ These professionals were seen as offering specialized services to bring the chaos of life, and death, under human control and were thus able to offer premium pricing for doing so. One way this was done was through the creation of rules and regulations for the types of monuments, plot enclosures, and decorations allowed. Adolph Strauch, superintendent of Spring Grove Cemetery in Cincinnati, Ohio and renowned landscape architect, is reported to have told his trustees “the general beauty of the cemetery landscape had been impaired by allowing individuals to enclose and embellish their own lots.”¹⁸ Therefore, he prohibited all clutter that was commonly found in rural cemetery gravesites, including fences and hedgerows surrounding family plots. Due to Strauch’s influence, Spring Grove set the ideal for cemetery planning during this time.

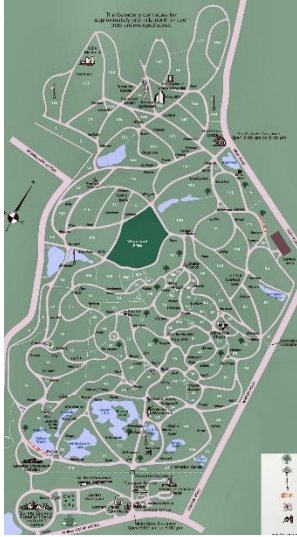


1858 Painting of Spring Grove Cemetery, Cincinnati, Ohio
Taken from:

<http://www.cincinnativiews.net/cemeteries.htm>

¹⁷ Ferrell 1980, 115

¹⁸ Ferrell 1980, 113



Map depicting winding roads of Spring Grove Cemetery

Taken from:
<http://www.cincinnati.ews.net/cemeteries.htm>

Spring Grove Cemetery was commissioned in 1845 as a nonprofit corporation formed by the Ohio General Assembly. Today, it is the largest nonprofit cemetery, and second largest overall, in the United States, with over 188,000 interments on 450 acres. There are still approximately 300 acres which have not yet been developed which are owned by the cemetery.¹⁹ Strauch's planning was unconventional at the time, but quickly became the norm. He believed in developing the landscape to harmonize with nature. He also rerouted roads to follow the natural shapes of the hills and valleys of the property. He constructed lakes, islands, footbridges, protected woodland areas, and imported plantings from all over the world. In 1987, the name was changed to Spring Grove Cemetery & Arboretum, giving emphasis to this expansive collection of State and National Champion Trees and exotic plant materials.

Spring Grove replaces 23 of the city's overcrowded church owned cemeteries. This overcrowding was made more evident by the cholera epidemic of the 1830-40s. The new belief created by the rural cemeteries of the time that gravesites should offer comfort to the surviving family gave even more emphasis to the unkempt nature of these cemeteries. Spring Grove still receives thousands of visitors each year, and offers tours of the more remarkable memorials and notable internments. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and recognized as a National Historic Landmark.²⁰

Of the notable internments, a particularly fascinating group is the Scottish, Irish, and Rom Gypsy graves in Spring Grove, which can arguably also be considered Cincinnati's best kept secret. Being a Cincinnati local, I have visited Spring Grove Cemetery countless times, and while recognizing the headstones discussed here, I never knew the story behind them. Upon mention of this to my mother, she told me that her father had talked about the Gypsies, but that everyone thought he was crazy.²¹ For over a century, the gypsy dead have almost exclusively been buried in Cincinnati, mostly at Spring Grove and St. Joseph Cemetery. The reason for this is Cincinnati's location in the North-South annual migration, which places the gypsies in Cincinnati every spring and fall. Because of the Gypsy tradition, funeral services are held the week after Easter for all of the dead that year, which places them in Cincinnati during this time. Spring Grove was located just a mile upstream from the traditional location of the Gypsy camp along the Mill Creek. This made it an ideal location. Up through the 1950s, all dead of the year were shipped to the morgue at Spring Grove to be stored until the yearly funeral.

¹⁹ Spring Grove- Cemeteries, Funeral Homes, Crematory

²⁰ National Park Service

²¹ Kay Rhodus, April 9, 2017. text message to author

The funeral was a huge display of wealth and honor of the dead. At one event in the 1950s, over \$35,000 was spent on floral arrangements, including sculptural creations depicting rocking chairs, grandfather clocks, oxen and wagons, broken wagon wheels, and masonic emblems. They also constructed giant family monuments, typically five to ten feet tall, which were constructed of red granite and imported from Scotland and Ireland. These monuments typically depicted the family name and a band of decorative carving, most likely to be thistle or twigs of arcadia, Caledonian symbols of the homeland. They were also typically marked by two urns on either side of the monument. Individual graves were marked by footstones, bearing the vital information of that person. All of this was paid for in cash, as wealth seemed to be a theme for the Gypsies. One Cincinnati resident recalls a funeral in the 1940s, “they drove big Cadillacs and wore diamonds.”²² This explains the use of Spring Grove cemetery, as their opulent graves would blend in with other opulent graves of Cincinnati’s elite. These graves all border the wooded areas of the cemetery and all are along the roadway, giving reference to the transitory nature of the Gypsy.



Gorman Family Memorial, St. Joseph Cemetery, Cincinnati
This monument is 6' in diameter and depicts the thistle and urns
Taken from: Ethnicity and the American Cemetery

Today, this tradition continues on a much smaller scale. Automobile and RV advancements have allowed the Gypsies to travel all over the country instead of just North and South along the I-75 corridor. Rising costs in transport of bodies and burials have also made it impractical for bodies to be shipped all the way across the country in order to be buried on traditional ground. However, on Memorial Day, it is still very common to find massive flower displays on the graves located in Cincinnati. These rising costs have also changed the way we create cemeteries in the 20th century, as will be discussed in a following section.

²² Erwin 1993, 121

Pet Cemeteries

Another unique trend in American cemeteries is the pet cemetery. While most simply bury their pets in the back yard, in the United States there exist proper cemeteries with memorials which house animals exclusively. These began as an adjunction to the family cemetery on large estates, but became public with other cemeteries in the 20th century. These cemeteries generally display more emotion than that of humans, with more decorative monuments and grave goods, such as a favorite toy, commonly found. Many animals can be found in these cemeteries including typical pets, such as dogs, cats, and rabbits. More extreme examples include camels, such as those used by the Confederacy during the Civil War, and lions. There are even some examples of owners being buried with their pets.

This trend began with Hartdale Canine Cemetery, located in Hartdale, New York. Starting in 1896, when a Manhattan veterinarian offered to let owners bury their dogs in his apple orchard. Today Hartdale features over 80,000 graves and is listed on the National Register. This became the burial ground for the pets of the elite, including a fifty-ton mausoleum housing two spaniels, and also houses the war dog memorial, the only memorial dedicated to animals of war.²³ With the popularity of this cemetery, the trend spread throughout the country, with countless examples here in the Midwest.



Grave of Arap, Hinsdale Animal Cemetery, Willowbrook, Illinois
Taken from:
https://ippl.info/localhistory/?page_id=1136

One such example is the Hinsdale Animal Cemetery and Cremator, located in Willowbrook, Illinois, a western suburb of Chicago. The cemetery was established in 1926, and today houses thousands of graves. While these have become more traditional with time, the historic section of the cemetery houses some of the highly decorative monuments described above. These include the grave of Arap, a Shepherd retriever mix who died protecting the Stankowicz family, the cemetery owners, from the Russian Communist militia prior to the family's immigration to the United States. The inscription reads "He gave up his life that a human might live. Greater love hath not man."²⁴ This is a very typical memorial of those found in pet cemeteries. They were viewed as resting places for the creature that loved you more than any human was capable of doing. Hinsdale also features a butterfly garden serving as a living memorial and site for scattering cremations.

²³ Hartsdale Pet Cemetery

²⁴ Indian Prairie Local Library

Cemetery Privatization

With the establishment of municipal nonprofit cemeteries, land speculators in the 20th century began to realize that the cemetery business might be a good one. Cemeteries were long seen as a community facility, charging only the basic amount required in order to actually install the grave and maintain the property. Because of this, they were exempt from real estate taxes. It was also somewhat typical that cemeteries were located on cheap land, as they were often on the outskirts of a town. Land which was not suitable for farming in these areas could be used for cemeteries, as well as land in unideal areas, such as near industry. With the invention of modern transportation, it was possible to move these cemeteries even further away from commercial centers and residential areas. Because of this, the land purchased for cemeteries was typically cheaper. With Spring Grove Cemetery, it became common that cemeteries could apply for nonprofit status, making them exempt from taxes on the plots sold. Private corporations began to create their own cemeteries and jacked up the prices, turning a huge profit.

The park cemetery design allowed for this while sites located in more prominent areas, such as near a lake or landscape area, could be sold for higher prices than interior or “ugly” lots. By implementing regulations on the types of monuments allowed to be constructed, these corporations also began to sell their own monuments, also exempt from taxation. While it is a violation of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act to require purchase of monuments from the corporation, they are allowed to charge a fee for the use of outside monuments. These fees are commonly hundreds of dollars and can sometimes be compounded with installation fees on top of this. Georgia is the only state to try and combat this so far, limiting the fee amount to \$125.²⁵ Cemeteries today are very poorly regulated in general, as can be seen in the Burr Oak Cemetery scandal.

Burr Oak is a 150-acre cemetery located in Alsip, Illinois, a southwestern suburb of Chicago, established in 1927. It is one of the few cemeteries in the Chicago area with an African American focus, and thus houses many notable African Americans. The cemetery has a maximum occupancy of 130,000 plots, however, there is record of 147,568 burials in the cemetery. In 2009, workers at the cemetery dug up approximately 300 graves and relocated them into a mass plot in order to resell the original spaces.²⁶ Public outcry created a new Illinois law which requires cemeteries to provide information on each grave into a central database and managers of private, nonreligious cemeteries must obtain a license. To obtain this license the managers must provide proof of education



Removed grave markers, Burr Oak Cemetery, Alsip, Illinois
Taken from:
<http://www.dailyherald.com/article/20110424/news/704249901/>

²⁵ Slocum and Carlson 2011, 56

²⁶ Koeske 2016

requirements and pass an exam.²⁷ However, no other state has such a law and this law has even been threatened since it is difficult for small cemeteries to allocate funds to such requirements. Because of this, 96 percent of cemeteries in the United States are completely unregulated.

The biggest concern of cemetery corporations today seems to be fitting as many bodies as possible into their lot. Because of this, the average plot today is just seven by three feet, or 180 square feet smaller than the lots at Mount Auburn. This limits the plot to a very small monument as well. In some cemeteries, they have implemented regulations which only allow for grave markers which are flush with the ground, often a simple rectangle of concrete with a bronze plaque on top. These simple markers reduce maintenance costs by 75 percent, with cemeteries now able to purchase industrial sized lawnmowers which glide ovetop of the markers instead of having to edge around each individual monument and landscape features.



Forest Lawn Memorial Park, Los Angeles, California with view of crematory mausoleum in background
Taken from:

<http://www.bestourism.com/items/di/6781%3Ftitle%3DForest-Lawn-Memorial-Park-in-Los-Angeles-USA%26b%3D237>

These conditions have led to the creation of what we now refer to as “Memorial Parks” replacing cemeteries. Perhaps the most famous of these is Forest Lawn, in Los Angeles, California. Forest Lawn looks exactly as its name would describe: a large lawn surrounded by forest. It is difficult to see the grave markers in the expansive sweep of grass. The cemetery opened in 1952 and housed almost 200,000 internments.

This includes the large crematory mausoleum, another new trend found in many modern American cemeteries since 27 percent of Americans are now cremated.²⁸ These mausoleums essentially take on the form of a large wall, typically located at one end of the cemetery. High prices are also charged for internment in these spaces, which are only slightly larger than a shoe box. The average cost for a cemetery plot today is equal to \$17 per cubic foot. This is twelve times more expensive than the average cost for a moderately sized house in America today. These costs have made cemeteries an almost hated necessity, as have the many scandals revolving around them. This may contribute to the amount of vandalism which occurs in our nation’s cemeteries, as well as the lack of interest in preservation. This makes preservation a particularly tough challenge, which will be discussed in the next section.

²⁷ Colman 2009

²⁸ Bachelor 2004, 13

Cemetery Law

Understanding the laws pertaining to cemeteries and their preservation can help to explain how the history of American cemeteries has progressed. It is important to research the laws of your state before beginning any kind of work on your cemetery, as these laws will show what you may legally do with this property. *Final Rights: Reclaiming the American Way of Death* is an excellent resource providing a breakdown for laws, state by state.

States' Rights

Each state has the right to regulate the creation of cemeteries, providing for establishment and discontinuance. They are also permitted to monitor their use. Many pass this right along to municipalities. This could mean that a locality could open up a private, family cemetery for new burials. However, burial in some places can create a public nuisance, and disinterment may also be deemed necessary if a cemetery is proved to be a nuisance. Regulations can also be passed to prohibit future burials in an existing cemetery, allow for enlargement of an existing cemetery, or to establish a new cemetery.

Cemetery Property

A gravestone or marker is the personal property of the person who places it near a grave and its ownership is passed to this person's heirs, so it is important to try and reach out to a descendant, if possible, before starting any work. The owner of a plot has the duty to care for and maintain the plot either personally or through an agent, so finding a descendent can also serve as a means to help clean up plots. A cemetery's trustees may supervise plots to prevent them from disintegrating to the point of unsightliness, so it is always possible for a cemetery owner to maintain it without consent of a plot owner. Some statutes even require a cemetery association to care for its plots. A cemetery association always has the duty to maintain the property in a reasonably safe condition, including proper maintenance of portions of the cemetery used for travel. If you are not the owner of the property, or a descendant of a burial located within the cemetery, make sure proper permission is obtained before starting any work. Criminal, civil, or both forms of liability exist for trespassing or other forms of injuries to a cemetery or individual burial plot if the plot is wrongfully invaded or desecrated. Even though you are only trying to help, this law could be interpreted against you.

Cemetery Vandalism

Vandalism and destruction of tombstones are criminal offenses. The person who erects a tombstone, or their heirs, may prosecute such an action. In most cases, the measure of damages is equal to the cost of restoration. However, since there is a strong public policy due to the indignity of the act, punitive damages may also be awarded. Always report acts of vandalism, since these actions can deter future desecration. Even though a cemetery may seem abandoned, it is most likely still considered a cemetery. Abandonment is the only way in which the use of land as a cemetery may cease. A cemetery is deemed abandoned if all interred bodies have been removed or the property has been neglected to such a degree that it is no longer identifiable as a cemetery. Evidence to support an abandonment claim must include that there are no remaining tombstones, no burials have taken place for many years, lack of knowledge of the cemetery to the general public, and no visits by family. As this is a very extensive list, it is unlikely that a cemetery could actually be declared abandoned, since there has to be knowledge of the cemetery to begin the suit.

Preservation Laws Pertaining to Cemeteries

Historic cemeteries may also be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, so long as they meet the Secretary of Interior Criteria. This will help to protect the cemetery from future damage, as this will weigh even heavier in a Section 106 review, which must be completed before any project which uses federal funding is begun. This listing can also be used as leverage against non-federal projects, although protection is not a guarantee. While it is unusual for a cemetery to be listed on the National Register, there are exceptions, such as a gravesite of a historical figure of outstanding importance if there is no appropriate site or building associated with their productive life; or a cemetery that derives its primary importance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features, or from association with historic events. If you think it is possible to write a strong nomination for your cemetery, do not hesitate to do so. Frequently, it is the strength of the argument in the nomination which makes a difference more than the site itself. It is also important to remember that anytime a grave could be of a Native American, it is essential to follow the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) protocol. It is highly recommended that you reach out to a NAGPRA worker before doing anything with the gravesite.²⁹

²⁹ See references for more information on laws pertaining to cemeteries and their preservation.

Cemetery Research

One of the first steps of any preservation project is to learn the history of the property. This can be somewhat more difficult to do for a privately-owned cemetery, since the cemetery may not be found on formal records. The best place to start this search for records is the local archives or genealogy center for your town or county. These are typically found in a library or historic society. Potential sources include family histories for those who owned the property or are known to be buried in the cemetery, church records from the area which may note burials, and property records for the property on which the cemetery is located. It is also important to try and determine if the cemetery has always been associated with the current property, as your record search may be for the wrong property if not. Be sure to include probate records in your search, because the property could have been divided up in wills, noting which part of the property the cemetery was on. These records can help to determine an age for your cemetery, as well as provide a list of unknown burials. Many genealogy centers and archives will have a section devoted to cemetery listings, which may provide you with a complete list of burials, as known at the time the internment list was written. Upon discovering the property owners during the time the cemetery was active, it can also be helpful to research these individuals and their heirs. If it is determined that the family moved, it might be helpful to search in this new location. A family history, or other papers, may have been donated to the library or historical society in the new place of residence.

St. Patrick Cemetery - Genealogy Burial Listing

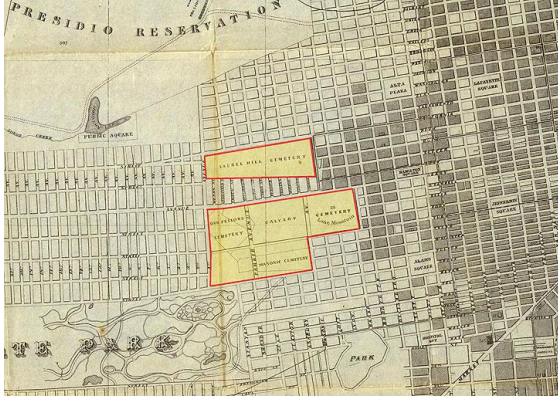
Page 1

As of 09/26/2012

Last	First	M	Age	Interred	Century	Yard	Range	Section	Lot	Grave	Funeral Director
ZABBO	ABELLO		4	02/02/1923	19	30	70	-	14	U2	
ZABBO	ARELLO	A	34	05/03/60	19	-	-	H	636	1	WCD
ZABBO	ANGELINA		6	11/09/1920	19	50	70	-	14	U1	
ZABBO	ANTHONY	J	36	07/01/78	19	-	-	H	556	1A	
ZABBO	CONCETTA		76	11/01/08	19	-	-	R	434	2	
ZABBO	FRANCES		64	04/12/58	19	-	-	R	434	1	
ZABBO	FRANCIS	C	58	11/20/79	19	50	62	-	5	1A	FAY
ZABBO	JOHN	L	10	04/30/71	19	-	-	C	504	2A	
ZABBO	PATRICIA	M	66	04/30/91	19	-	-	H	630	1A	WCD
ZABBO	SALVATORE		9	06/01/67	19	-	-	R	434	1A	
ZABBO	SALVATORE	J	62	05/15/79	19	-	-	J	161	1	
ZABBO	THERESA	M	75	12/1/99	19	50	62	-	5	2	FAY-WCCBBE
ZABBO	VINCENT		0	05/15/63	19	-	-	R	434	1A	
ZABBO	VINCENT		77	03/25/63	19	-	-	R	434	1A	
ZABEREH	ELEANOR	M	46	03/24/69	19	-	-	WB	106	1A	
ZABINSKI	EDWARD		1	01/01/1921	19	50	70	-	38	U1	
ZACAROSH	AGATHA		65	10/02/72	19	-	-	R	91	1A	
ZACAROSH	VINCENT	J	25	11/16/78	19	-	-	R	91	2	

Sample Cemetery Internment list. Most include name of deceased, and exact location in cemetery. This is typically marked by range, section, lot, and grave

Taken from: <https://img.yumpu.com/2569934/1/358x462/st-patrick-cemetery-genealogy-burial-listing.jpg?quality=80>



Plat map showing cemetery locations within the city of San Francisco.

Taken from:

http://www.foundsf.org/index.php?title=Old_Cemeteries_in_the_City

If this location is too far for travel, a local employee of the library or historical society can often conduct this search for you, sending any material they come across. Employees can also help in person, as they often have a thorough knowledge of the collection and may find something in a place you would not think to look. Online resources can often be very helpful in your search as more and more resources are being digitized. These digitized collections are frequently searchable, and linked to Google, making your search much simpler. Genealogy websites, cemetery websites, and other archives can be good online resources.³⁰ Historic maps of the area can also be an important resource, found in both local libraries and online repositories.³¹

³⁰ A listing of useful genealogy and cemetery websites, as well as digital archives can be found as Appendices 1, 2, and 3.

³¹ A listing of useful maps can be found as Appendix 4.

Locating Graves

It is possible, and even likely, that your cemetery has more graves than surviving headstones would indicate. As stone monuments would have been very expensive, wooden monuments were much more common. These were typically used by the lower classes, who could not afford the skilled labor to have a stone hand carved. Wooden monuments became less common with mechanization, causing stone to become cheaper and able to be carved by machine.³² Wood monuments, typically untreated, deteriorated very quickly, and are unlikely to leave any visible evidence of their existence today. Many other headstones were simply a rock which was placed at the site of the grave. These rocks can be moved over time, and could seem natural if found. Other graves did not have any sort of marker at all. Because of all of these variations, the locations of many gravesites are unknown and may require some additional research. Here, internment lists are also very helpful, as they may have specific listings of grave locations which are currently unknown to you. However, these internment lists are most often simply a list that someone compiled as they walked through the cemetery themselves. It is possible that headstones were missing before this walkthrough. Because of this, it is also important to use other methods of finding graves, when available.



A deteriorated wooden headstone

Taken from:

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wooden_headstone_Avoqa.JPG

Visible topography changes are often a good indicator of grave locations. Older graves tend to have a prominent dip in ground level. While this is often visible to the naked eye, employing an archeologist can be helpful in areas where you are unsure. An archeologist can also perform tests such as ground penetrating radar and probing in order to provide a better idea of where additional graves may be located.³³ Ground penetrating radar uses an electromagnetic frequency, similar to sonar, to send wavelengths into the ground. If there is any kind of soil disruption, the wavelength will bounce off of that, creating a different form of line on the readout.



An extreme example of ground settlement on graves.

Taken from: www.google.com/images

³² International Southern Cemetery Gravestones Association

³³ Information on how to locate professional archeologists located in Appendix 5.



Cemetery Probing

Taken from:

<https://www.ncptt.nps.gov/blog/finding-avondale-remote-sensing-for-an-unmarked-cemetery-in-difficult-subsurface-conditions/>

A trained professional can analyze these readouts to determine the approximate size, shape, and depth of the disturbance. This can be used to create a map of the cemetery, showing the likely location of unmarked graves.³⁴ Probing is also used by professional archeologists, but it is possible to do yourself. Probing simply checks the soil for any changes in consistency, showing soft spots. It is important to use a short probe, as historic graves are often much shallower than today's six-foot standard, averaging between two and four feet deep. Also, be sure to probe transects no larger than three feet and at one foot intervals to be sure you will not miss small graves of infants or children. When a soft spot is found it is important to find the edges and mark them. Rectangular, east-west facing spots are often graves, and can be added to your cemetery map. Once you feel your map is complete, you may want to have a surveyor create and record an accurate map with the land records office so that graves are not lost in the future.³⁵

³⁴ Ground Penetrating Rader Systems Inc.

³⁵ Roots Web

Cemetery Maintenance

Once you have completed the research for your cemetery and have a map showing the proper boundaries and grave locations in your cemetery, you should begin maintaining the full cemetery to the extent of these newly discovered boundaries. Many well-meaning individuals have caused harm to historic cemeteries by using improper maintenance techniques. This section will focus on proper mowing of your historic cemetery, animal interactions, preventing vandalism, new construction or planting, and cleaning the various materials found in your historic cemetery.

Proper Mowing

Improper mowing techniques can be very hazardous to cemeteries. Using a lawnmower that is too large can result in damage to headstones, which may be chipped or knocked out of place. Make sure that your mower is small enough to pass clearly between each row of stones. It is also better to use a walk behind mower, since riding mowers typically move faster, making it easier to



Mowers this large cannot fit safely between graves, causing damage to stones.

Taken from:

<http://funerallaw.typepad.com/blog/2014/04/mandatory-grave-care.html>

lose control and hit a stone. You should be sure to mow often, as long grasses attract more animals, which can damage the stones. Tall grasses can also lead to more environmental growth on the stones, as the stones will be in a cooler and darker environment. It is also important to remember to do trim work around all of the monuments, again to keep tall grasses, environmental growth, and animals away from the stones. This should be done with a handheld trimmer, not an attachment to the mower deck. Using a mower deck attachment will cause you to get closer to the stones with the mower, increasing the likelihood of damage. Be careful when using handheld trimmers as well, as these can also damage stones when used improperly. Regular mowing and trimming is also important since this helps to keep likely vandals at bay. Vandals are more likely to visit a cemetery where they feel they will not get caught. This is much easier in tall grass, or a cemetery known to be abandoned.³⁶

³⁶ Gravestone Preservation

Animal Interactions

Both wild and domestic animals can have a negative impact on cemetery preservation. Burrowing animals can burrow into graves and under monuments, causing the monuments to settle further into the ground or fall. These rodents are typically seen as a nuisance, with no redeeming qualities. Traps may be set, but be sure to check them often. Fencing which completely surrounds the cemetery, with a closable gate, can also help to keep pests out, but they can burrow under these as well. Larger animals of prey may enter the cemetery looking to feed on these rodents. Although larger animals may also cause destruction as they are able to knock over headstones, the benefits of controlling the rodent population may outweigh these risks. Regular mowing can help with an animal infestation, since this will give them less ground cover and less grazing fodder. Avoiding plants that are known food sources, such as fruit trees, can also help keep animals away. Plant remediation may be required in extreme cases to relocate existing fruit trees. Plants which deter animals can also be added to the cemetery, such as peppermint which may keep away mice. It is important to look up the local wildlife for your area when trying to keep animals at bay. A professional can also be consulted if necessary.



Peppermint plants can deter many pests, including rodents, felines, canines, and insects.

Taken from: thehomedepot.com

Domestic animals present a much different issue. There is currently controversy over the admittance of animals in cemeteries. One such example is goats. In some cemeteries, goats have been introduced as a form of grounds keeping, because they will eat any tall grass and typically do so quite quickly. These goats are typically introduced for a short period of time, in more extreme cases of neglected cemeteries. Goats can damage headstones, as they can and will climb anything. The chemicals in their waste can also be damaging to the stones. In these situations, it is important to measure the risk against the reward, in determining how to treat your cemetery. Dogs are similarly considered in cemeteries to goats, since it is possible for them to cause damage if not properly monitored. However, allowing dog



Goats trim overgrown grass at the Congressional Cemetery in Washington D.C.

Taken from: abcnews.com

walking will bring more traffic into your cemetery, perhaps sparking interest in the cemetery and repeat visitors.

Many rural, privately owned cemeteries can be found in fields which house livestock. These animals are a hazard to cemeteries, due to their sheer size and lack of benefits for the area.



Livestock herds can destroy a cemetery very quickly by trampling over graves, due to their size alone. Taken from: thesun.co.uk

In these situations, it is important to make sure that your cemetery is enclosed with a fence which will prevent the livestock from entering the grounds. However, it is important to think about access for visitors as well. All cemeteries should be as accessible as possible, which cannot be done if a visitor has to climb two fences and outrun a bull to enter the cemetery. Posting clear instructions for entering the cemetery safely, providing contact information to be let into the cemetery, or constructing a safe entryway can provide access while allowing the area to be a productive habitat. Remember, even if you only have one headstone propped up against a tree, this is still considered a cemetery by law and should be protected as such.

Preventing Vandalism

Vandalism is the biggest cause of cemetery destruction today. Between heated political climates and “mischievous teenagers”, vandalism is on the rise and becoming increasingly hard to prevent. A rise in anti-Semitism has seen a dramatic increase in the number of Jewish cemeteries being vandalized, and hate crimes of all sorts have increased dramatically over the past year. Rural cemeteries are especially easy targets, as they are typically located in minimally traveled areas and not maintained regularly. Both defensive and offensive methods should be used to try and prevent vandalism. This is another reason to make sure that regular maintenance is performed, as this keeps the cemetery looking regularly visited and keeps tall grass at bay, which can be a camouflage for unscrupulous behavior. You are also able to discover and correct vandalisms more quickly, preventing copycat crimes. Installation of a fence can also be a helpful deterrent of vandals, as a fenced cemetery presents a bigger challenge. It is very important to make sure gates are closed during the night, since a fence with a hole in it will not deter anyone and might even look like an invitation. It is possible that additional measures will be needed, because it is still relatively easy to climb a fence.

In these instances, installation of lights can be helpful, taking away the cover of darkness and making it more likely that a vandal will be caught. In rural areas, motion detecting lighting may be more effective as they create the illusion that someone is watching even when there is no one around. For optimal protection, cameras can be installed to monitor the cemetery at all times. Even without running, the presence of a camera box can deter wrongdoers, as they think they are being watched. Here again, motion detecting cameras can be much more effective, as this leaves much less film to view. If a vandalism is recorded, it is more likely that the vandal will be caught, since the authorities at least have a physical description of the vandal. This can both prevent future vandalisms in your cemetery, for fear of getting caught, and prevent those specific vandals from acting again, since they now know the consequences of their actions.

Preventing potential vandals from acting in the first place is a very important component to counteracting vandalism. Education is the best method for this and can be done in a variety of ways. Mailings to local residents, posted flyers throughout the community, brochures at the cemetery, and sessions or classes held in the community can all be utilized to explain the laws pertaining to vandalism, as well as show the value of preserving cemeteries. Sessions and classes can be held in the cemetery during special events, volunteer days, or during events in the community.

Providing this information to young people is especially important. It could be possible to arrange a day to speak to individual classes, a school wide assembly, or even a field trip to the cemetery for youth of your local high school. Since this is a serious topic discussing laws and criminal activity, high school seems most appropriate. However, it can be beneficial to host more lighthearted events for smaller children, in order to give them a positive memory of visiting cemeteries. With proper education and building positive correlations with all places of burial, the

frequency of cemetery desecrations will likely decrease, perhaps even ending such events for future generations.

Construction and Planting

While it may be tempting to use the area around your historic cemetery for financial gain or other uses, this can in fact be quite hazardous. If you have taken measures to determine the full extent of your cemetery, construction projects are possible outside of this determined boundary. However, without proper mapping, it is possible that this construction could run into graves which are located outside of the obvious bounds of your cemetery. This could result in the accidental



It is not uncommon for construction sites to be halted as graves are found outside of a cemetery border, as seen here on the University of Georgia campus where over 90 sets of remains have been discovered.

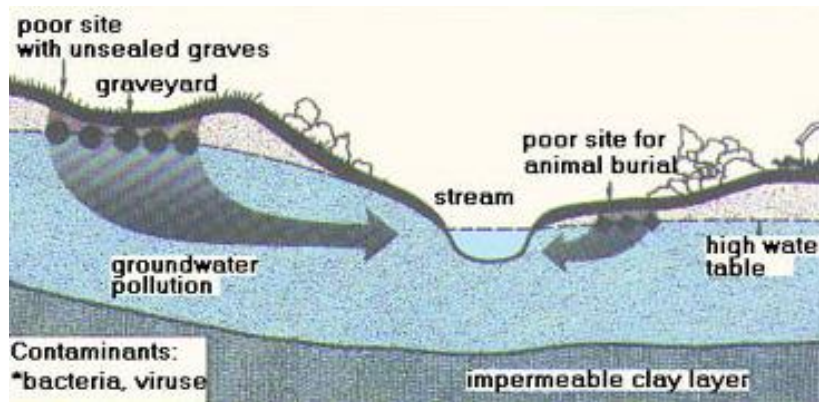
Taken from: <http://onlineathens.com/local-news/2016-10-21/workers-found-more-burials-expected-uga-construction-site-near-old-athens>

disinterment of graves, halting construction indefinitely while these burials are handled properly. If it is impossible to avoid construction in or near your historic cemetery, remediation must be done to relocate all of the graves to a safe location. This could also include proper mapping, to recreate the layout of the original cemetery, and extensive photography, to show the existing conditions of the cemetery, including maker conditions, planting types and locations, and decorative features or fencing. Consultation with a preservation, archeological, or botanical professional would be necessary to determine exactly what is needed in these particular cases.

Agricultural planting should also be avoided near cemeteries for similar reasons to the construction issues listed above. If the cemetery is not properly mapped, planting could be located directly over a grave. While it is unlikely that this would disinter the body, the plant will be contaminated, as the root system will likely reach the grave. Depending on the death of this person, this could not only be life threatening to the person ingesting this food product, but could even start a widespread outbreak of contagious disease. Even if the cemetery has been properly mapped and you are certain the crops will not be located on a grave, it is still possible for contamination through groundwater, especially if the cemetery is on a higher grade than the crops.³⁷ Planting near a cemetery could also lead to stray crops growing within the cemetery, wreaking havoc on the plant life which is preexisting in the cemetery. These plants could also cause damage to markers, graves,

³⁷ Final Rights 1998, 67-80

and fencing. Again, if it is impossible to avoid planting in this area, remediation efforts can be made to document and relocate the cemetery, but these will almost certainly be extremely costly.



Diagrammatic image depicting groundwater contamination from a cemetery.

Taken from:

<http://www.hillsdalecounty.info/planningeduc0020.asp>

Cleaning Methods

If your cemetery has not been properly maintained in the past, it is likely that the monuments will need to be cleaned. Environmental growth and staining can speed up the aging process on most stones, making the text illegible over time. There are currently many methods utilized to clean headstones, however there are some which can cause more harm than good.



Example of soluble salt damage to a headstone in the form of spalling.

Taken from:

<http://www.oldcem.bc.ca/psp/html/reports/todd/>

Abrasive products can scratch the stone, allowing future moisture and growth to seep farther into the stone, which makes cracking more likely. If a brush is needed, make sure that it has soft, natural bristles, such as a soft toothbrush.³⁸ It is also important to avoid using products that contain compounds such as sodium bicarbonate, sodium chloride, sodium sulfate, ammonium carbonate, and trisodium phosphate (TSP or Calgon) since these can contribute in the build-up of soluble salts beneath the surface of the stone, causing further damage. Soluble salts include nitrates, sulfates, and chlorides, which are drawn into the stone through its pores. When the water evaporates, these salts are left behind, causing damage to the stone in the form of spalling, flaking, powdering, and sugaring.³⁹ All forms of acids should also be avoided as they can be corrosive to the stone.

Limestone and marble monuments can be cleaned with a solution of one part ammonia to four parts water, which will remove biological growth. The safest measure to clean stones is to use only water, adding the ammonia solution when absolutely necessary and rinsing with clean water afterwards. Pressure can also damage the stone, so avoid high pressure hoses when applying water. Rinse from bottom to top to avoid streaking and staining. Extra care should be taken when cleaning headstones which are already damaged, possibly even avoiding areas with cracking or flaking. Due to the delicate nature of the historic stone, gravestones should be cleaned no more than once a year, and can be done infrequently at once per decade. Particularly dirty areas on headstones may need more than one scrubbing to come clean. In these cases, it is also possible to create a poultice of equal parts water, glycerin, and porcelain clay, which will draw the staining out of the stone.⁴⁰ Glycerin can be purchased at most grocery, craft, and home goods stores, while porcelain clay can be purchased at arts supply stores.

Granite stones are more durable than marble and limestone, making it possible to use tougher cleaning methods when needed. These monuments can be cleaned with the same methods

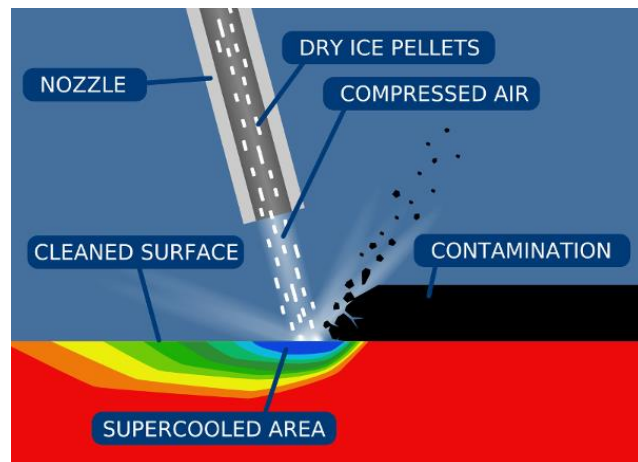
³⁸ Michigan Historic Cemeteries Preservation Guide 2004, 79-85

³⁹ NPS Conserve O Gram, August 1998

⁴⁰ International Southern Cemetery Gravestones Association

used above, but it is also safe to use non-ionic detergents and biologic cleaning materials in cases where gentler methods are not affective. Non-ionic detergents are chemically natural, preventing the buildup of soluble salts. They are also non-foaming and do not affect the pH of the stone. They also reduce droplet formation on the stone's surface. These may be found at conservation, janitorial, and arts supply stores.⁴¹ Biologic cleaning materials use natural microorganisms to transform complex organic molecules into simple substances, such as water and carbon dioxide. This is a more natural process, which has less of an effect on stones and the environment than harsh chemicals.⁴² These cleaners are available at conservation and pet supply stores. Metal tombstones can be cleaned with a solution of one tablespoon of dish soap per half cup of water. Hard bristled brushes can be used as well. After cleaning, it is important to spray metal tombstones with distilled water, making the surface chemically inert. It is also important to dry metal headstones after cleaning to avoid rust.⁴³ If you are still unsure about the material or methods needed for cleaning your cemetery, a conservation consultant may also be contacted.

A controversial method of cleaning headstones is beginning to be used more often. Dry Ice Blasting is a safe alternative to sand blasting. In this method, dry ice particles are vaporized and propelled with compressed air against the surface, breaking the bond between the surface and substrate. The air stream then pushes the grime away from the stone. This method is effective, as it is a much quicker process and can reach crevices and fragile areas which cleaning by hand cannot. While this product seems much safer and more effective than other cleaning methods, it is important to keep in mind that dry ice blasting has only been in use for approximately twenty-five years, with little study into the long-term effects of the product on the monument.⁴⁴



Simplified diagram of how dry ice blasting works to remove grime from stones.

Taken from: <http://www.jettyrobot.com/jetty-system/blasting-media/dry-ice-blasting/>

⁴¹ Saving Graves.

⁴² Biological Cleaning Solutions.

⁴³ International Southern Cemetery Gravestones Association.

⁴⁴ Good Environmental Services, Inc.

Cemetery Preservation

Once your cemetery is properly maintained, you may wish to take your cemetery rehabilitation to the next step, making repairs to damaged features of your historic cemetery. It is important that is done with care to ensure that the historic integrity of the cemetery remains. This section will give information on proper forms of headstone and fencing repair and replacement, remediating issues with historic landscaping, and preventing erosion to ensure a longer and more historically accurate life for your cemetery.

Headstone Repair

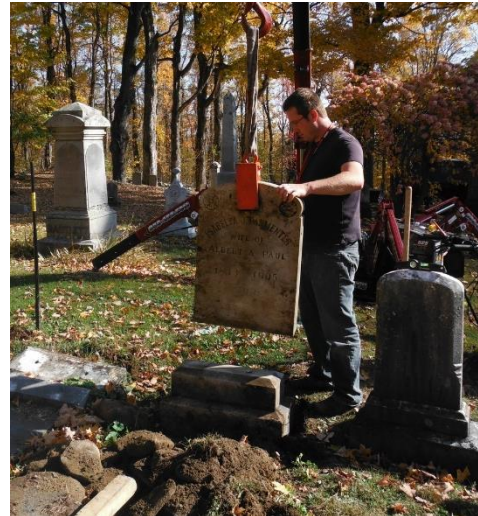
If a broken headstone still has structural integrity, it is possible to repair the headstone, with methods varying by headstone material. While mortar has traditionally been used to reattach broken elements of headstones, it is often very thick, and can wear out relatively quickly. Currently, epoxies are much better suited, since they are much thinner and have better bonding agents. Stone epoxies can be purchased from a local monument retailer. If the break has existed for a long period of time, it is possible that a stone filler, including natural fillers such as mortar and synthetic fillers, will need to be used between the pieces of stone, because both the intact stone and the broken fragment will have weathered since the break. This is another reason why it is important to make repairs as soon as possible after damage is discovered. Some monuments may be so deteriorated that the filler will be a visible replacement for pieces of the stone which are missing. It is almost impossible to make this patch match the existing stone, and some would argue that it is better to make the patch stand out, so that it is obvious that it is a patch. Metal monuments, while less likely to break, will need to be welded back together, requiring a professional welder.

It is also possible to reset monuments that are still intact but have fallen off or out of their base. For stones where the base is intact with a slot for insertion, typical of simple rectangular stones, use can use a simple mortar mix to reinsert the monument. The mortar mix typically used for this is composed of one part Portland cement, four parts hydrated lime, eight parts clean sand, and a sparing amount of water. Place the mortar into the slot, then insert the stone into the slot. The stone will need to be held in place, typically done with propped wooden boards, until the mortar is dry. It is also important to clean off any excess mortar before it dries. Freestanding monuments are sometimes attached with metal rods run through the center of the two pieces of stone. Historically these were typically made out of ferrous metals, causing them to rust over time.



Headstone repair with visible filler.

Taken from: Stone Revival Historic Preservation



Slotted gravestone resetting, with use of a crane.

Taken from: Gravestone Services of New England

In addition to pieces of the monument falling off, this can also leave stains on the monument, and cause cracking and breaking of the stone while the metal expands. If possible, these rods should be removed and replaced with a non-ferrous metal. Be very careful doing so, as the movement of the pin can cause the monument to break further. If removal of the pin seems more risky than rewarding, cut off the pin as low as possible and paint the exposed section with a rust inhibitor.



Visible pin rusting within a headstone. Will lead to eventual pin break and damage to the stone.

Taken from:

<http://www.oaklandcemetery.com/monument-preservation-102/>

This will slow down the corrosion process, but the stone may still break in the future. Some other multi piece headstones are simply set in place, using gravity to hold it in place. In these cases, the base of the stone will have to be reset and made level again before resetting the monument on top. This can be a large task, requiring excavation, and you will not know how large the underground portion of the stone is until this process is begun.⁴⁵ These stones will often require some form of lift to move, and costs can add up quite quickly. Here, it is best to hire a conservation professional, since the large stones can become quite dangerous to those who are not exactly sure what they are doing.

⁴⁵ Gravestone Preservation.

Headstone Replacement

In worse case scenarios, a headstone will be irreparable. The fragments of this headstone can be used to create a new, replacement stone. On this new stone, it is important to try and recreate the old stone as closely as possible, leaving blank the information that is unknown. This may mean that letter, dates, or whole words are left off of the new stone. It is better to be accurate than to create an untrue depiction. If there is a design element that likely continues along the missing piece, such as a wreath border which is missing a slice, it is appropriate to fill in this void with the pattern. You may want to replace the monument with the same construction material, making it appear more accurate; however, many also use granite, as is used in most modern stones, knowing that the deterioration process is much slower to ensure that the new stone will last longer. This is a matter of personal preference, so long as it is obvious that the new stone is a replacement. Should you decide that you wish to mark graves which have no surviving historic marker, again only use information which you know for certain.⁴⁶ The last thing you want to do is accidentally mark the wrong grave. These markers may simply be small stones which say “unknown” similar to what is done in military cemeteries and mass grave plots. Again, the design of these stones is a matter of personal preference, but should be comparable with existing stones in the cemetery. For example, if your cemetery consists entirely of lawn level markers, new markers should not be monolithic.



Example of headstone replacement, using the same material to replace the bottom portion of the stone.

Taken from: <http://conserve-art.com/cemetery-preservation/>

⁴⁶ Gravestone Preservation.

Fencing Repair/ Replacement

This section will focus on metal and stone fencing, the materials most often used in historic cemeteries. Wood fences may have existed in some historic cemeteries, but with a much shorter lifespan it is hard to know for sure without investigation, either through photographic or archeological evidence.



Historic photograph depicting a wooden fence surrounding a cemetery.

Taken from: Dedicated to the Progress of the Village of Amelia.

The most common issue in metal fencing is rust, as they are typically made out of iron or steel. This first line of defense against rust is to coat the surface with something to protect it. This is frequently done with paint, and your historic fence may show paint fragments already. This paint may be used to match a new color, or you can choose a new color yourself. Black is the color used most often, however greens and stone colors were also used historically to bring out the detail in elaborate fences. In order to properly paint a historic fence, it must first be cleaned of any existing paint fragments, rust, or general grime. The fence will likely need to be sanded in areas with rust, since the rust penetrates into the metal. If the rust is too deep, this piece of the fence will likely need replaced, since coating over rust is only a temporary solution. A rust inhibitive primer should be used, with application as soon as possible after cleaning. Be sure to avoid water based paints, which will cause the metal to rust more

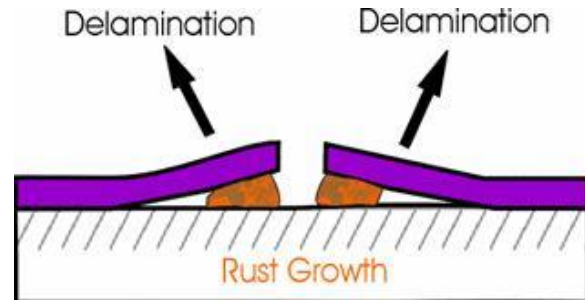
quickly. High-gloss paints are both historically accurate and will help to shed dirt and grime to make future maintenance easier. If your fence is made of cast iron, it is very difficult to repair broken sections. A very skilled welder may be able to mend cast iron, but it has to be heated much hotter than other metals to repair and is often too thin to do so. Any repairs will be cosmetic only, and structural issues will have to be reinforced with steel or replaced completely.⁴⁷

Replacing cast iron pieces can also be difficult, because you will have to find an iron works that has the mold for that specific design. Stewart Iron Works of Covington, Kentucky has been in business since 1862 and has many historic molds and the capability to reproduce these molds. It is possible that your existing historic cemetery fence was made by Stewart, especially if located in the Midwest. If you can find a manufacturer's stamp on your fence, it would be useful to first see if this manufacturer is still in existence, as they may have the mold. It is also possible, although more costly, to laser scan the fence and 3-D print the new piece needed. These pieces will need to be built up at least 1/8 of an inch, due to the fact that cast iron shrinks in the cooling process. Wrought

⁴⁷ Chicora Foundation, Inc.

iron is much easier to replace, as it can be recreated with mild steel. However, mild steel is not as strong as historic wrought iron, and will likely wear out much sooner.⁴⁸

Masonry anchoring fails much more frequently than the metal features of a fence. These stone features are much easier to rebuild, using comparable stone and mortar. An issue to note is attaching the metal to the stone. This was historically done by creating a hole in the stone larger than the connecting member and then filling the extra cavity with molten lead. Since lead is no longer a safe construction material, these should be replaced with an epoxy filler, when needed. With epoxy, this section of metal will still need to be coated to protect from rust to prevent rust jacking, which could cause the stone section of fencing to crumble with time. Rust jacking is the process of ferrous metal oxidizing within the masonry. As this metal rusts, it expands causing displacement of the stone surrounding the metal.⁴⁹ New anchor systems are often made of concrete, but must be poured below the frost line, leading to excavation costs as well.



Simplified diagram of rust jacking.

Taken from:

<http://www.amteccorrosion.co.uk/coatingbreakdown.html>

If a completely new fence must be installed, images or descriptions of fencing found in your cemetery research can be used to recreate this fence, or a modern interpretation of this fence. If there is no evidence of a historic fence, it is better to install a simple, contemporary fence than a fence that could be perceived as “fake history” by imitating something which never existed in this location.

⁴⁸ Stewart Iron Works.

⁴⁹ Metropolitan Engineering Consulting & Forensics Services.

Historic Landscaping

Plantings in historic cemeteries can be equally important to preserve as the monuments. As stated in the history section, many plants held symbolic meaning, and these should be preserved also to tell the whole story of the cemetery. To determine if plants are historic, consulting a historic gardening book can help identify unfamiliar plants, due to the vast changes with modern fauna. Professional consultation may also be required. Before trimming, relocating, or removing these plantings, it is important that they are documented in their current condition, so that future plant maintenance may be done appropriately. Plant conservation is more difficult, since the landscape is constantly changing and may look dramatically different from season to season. Because of this, documentation should be done during each season, to ensure that all plants are observed.



Intentional plantings can easily become overgrown without proper maintenance, damaging the stone.

Taken from: [Pinterest.com](https://www.pinterest.com)

When historic plants begin to overgrow, it can cause dramatic damage to monuments and fences. In addition to roots upsetting foundations, some plants can be acidic, deteriorating limestone and marble at a much quicker rate. These plants can also become home to unwanted animals and, if close enough to monuments, lead to more environmental growth. In most cases, simply trimming the plants back to an appropriate size and distance from stones will solve this problem. Trimming will need to be added to a regular maintenance plan to be done at least once a year, as the plants will grow back into their overgrown state quickly.

If simply trimming the plant is not enough, it is possible to move the plant to another location in the cemetery. Plants should not be moved from one grave to another, but may be placed around the perimeter of the cemetery, or along roadways or other common areas. If there are not any available locations for planting along roadways, common area, or the cemetery perimeter, and the plant must be moved to another grave, it is best to try and relocate near a grave within the same family. Living family members will not want to see their plantings moved to the grave of someone they do not know. If a plant must be completely removed, for example, due to disease or harm to other plants or the headstones, it is possible to replace this planting with a compatible plant. This could mean another historically accurate plant, or a contemporary plant which has a similar appearance to the one removed. Always be sure to only use new plantings which will not grow to be too large for the area in which they are being planted, and to trim new plantings regularly. A landscape conservationist may also be consulted to develop a plan for maintaining and adapting the landscape of your historic cemetery.

Erosion

Fighting erosion can be one of the most challenging aspects of cemetery preservation. It is often a delicate balance between preserving the historic setting of the cemetery, including uneven ground and nearby water features, and preventing this setting from causing more damage to the monuments and graves within the cemetery. If there are areas of your cemetery that do not have a lush ground cover, planting one can be one of the most effective ways to combat erosion. Be mindful of the current groundcover in the area, as well as what types of groundcover would traditionally grow in the area. Transplanting ground cover from another area of the cemetery is the ideal method for this, but be sure not to take too much, creating the same problem in a previously lush area. The best method for this is to take small sections from all across the lush area, so that it does not appear to be missing. In the new area, spread these small sections out, so that they may grow together over time. If there are areas of your cemetery which are particularly hard to mow, installing a ground cover which does not require mowing to this area can be very efficient. This can also help to prevent erosion caused by trying to mow in areas which are not suitable for a lawnmower to pass through, such as dramatic slopes. An erosion specialist can also be consulted in extreme cases, such as potential landslides.



In extreme cases, such as this one, severe erosion on a hillside can lead to landslides.

Taken from: <http://fortgarrycemetery.ca/projects/cemetery-projects-issues-funding/>

Funding

All of these research, maintenance, and preservation efforts can add up to be extremely costly, making it nearly impossible for a private property owner to afford. Luckily, there are many solutions to funding efforts for your historic cemetery. This section provides some ideas of ways to generate funds. Not all of these options can be used in conjunction, and you should determine which ones will be best suited for your cemetery's situation. This section is also designed more for inspiration, for you to develop your own creative funding solutions as well.

Not-for-Profit Status

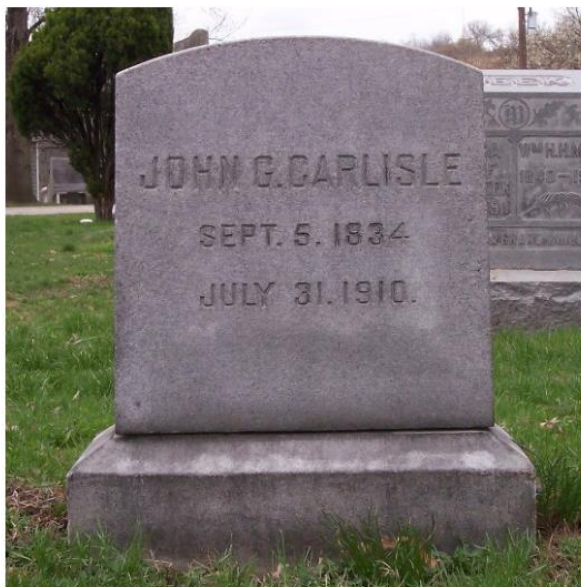
As you begin to try and raise funds for your cemetery, people are often more likely to donate, or at least give larger donations, if it is eligible for tax deductions. It is also beneficial to be able to keep more of the funds that you earn. Therefore, many cemeteries have gone through the process to become a 501(c)3. The first step in doing this is creating a foundation, which will require support of additional people to create a board. From here, the foundation can apply to become a 501(c)3 with the IRS. Non-for-Profit status also allows your cemetery foundation to apply for grants, which are available for restoration work and cemetery promotion activities. The foundation will also be able to accept endowments, which may provide funds for the cemetery for decades to come.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ International Cemetery, Cremation, and Funeral Association.

Adopt a Plot Programs

Some successful urban cemeteries, including Linden Grove Cemetery in Covington, Kentucky, have begun to do Adopt a Plot Programs. This program allows individuals to “adopt” an individual grave site for a fee, similar to the symbolic wildlife adoption programs done by the World Wildlife Fund. This fee is a tax-deductible donation to the cemetery, providing funds, and allows the individual to do some of the work for the cemetery. The individual, as part of their adoption, may visit the grave, performing minor maintenances and placing decorations. This will improve the general appearance of the cemetery, creating the appearance that there are still individuals who care about the cemetery. Individuals may also research their plot, providing more information to the cemetery about that person and their burial. You can encourage individuals to send any information they find, so that it can be added to the cemetery archives or history. This can also be a good tool for locating descendants, since research may turn up living relatives, who might also be interested in the preservation of their ancestor’s graves.

It is important to keep in mind that only graves over 100 years old may be used in this program, due to the fact that newer graves may still have active descendant visitors, and information is not available to the general public on recent deaths. The Linden Grove Cemetery has created a webpage dedicated to this program, with listings of all of the graves which may be adopted, including an image of the headstone, known information about the person, and cost to



Example plot adoption, showing an image of the stone, cost, and a brief description of the inhabitant.

Taken from: <https://historiclindengrove.org/adoptaplot/>

John G. Carlisle

\$55.00

John Griffin was a Representative and a Senator from Kentucky; born in Campbell (now Kenton) County, Ky., September 5, 1834; attended the common schools; taught school in ...

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[View Full Item](#)

adopt. All of their plots are listed at \$55.00, however you should decide what is an appropriate amount for your cemetery, possibly varying prices with more elaborate monuments or notable people costing more to adopt. Linden Grove also holds an end of the year event to honor those who have adopted plots and update everyone on the new information found by these individuals. This is a great way to spread

the word about your cemetery, bringing in new people to visit, who will grow to care for the cemetery. Often, the best way to save any historic building, space, or object is by creating investment in the feature by as many people as possible. Linden Grove has a hashtag for their adopt a plot program, #lindenlives. This program can be adapted to suit any cemetery which has multiple graves and more or less requirements for adoption can be adapted based on your individual needs, while bringing in significant funds.⁵¹

⁵¹ Historic Linden Grove Cemetery & Arboretum

Cemetery Programming

Many cemeteries also hold events which can help raise awareness and funds for the cemetery. These events can even be located on site, actively bringing people into the cemetery and aiding in making positive connections with cemeteries in general. Events can also include educational programming, as mentioned in the Preventing Vandalism section. The Congressional Cemetery in Washington D.C. has an extensive number of programming including 5ks, cemetery tours, exercising programs, lectures, and book clubs. Some of their events are free, simply serving the purpose of getting people to the cemetery, while more notable programs often have a fee.

One of the most expensive programs, which currently has a two year wait list, is the K9 Corps. This is a dog walking program which allows registered dogs to be walked within the



Congressional Cemetery K9
Corps logo.

Taken from: Cemetery Dogs
Twitter Page

boundaries of the cemetery. Membership, which lasts one year, costs \$285 plus an additional \$50 for additional dogs owned. There is also a \$75 fee just to be put on the waitlist. Members must also volunteer at least 8 hours in the cemetery. The cemetery has limited this program to 770 dogs, which all go through a screening process and must be invited to join the program. All waste must be picked up, and any unruly dogs or owners will be removed from the program in order to protect the cemetery. Day passes are also available during office hours for \$10, but a waiver must be signed. The funds raised from this program cover ¼ of all operating costs at the cemetery. This steady stream of people and dogs also provides a security system for the cemetery, as there are typically people coming and going during all hours of the day.⁵²

While this is most likely an unobtainable goal for many of the cemeteries for which this guide is designed, it is a good model of what successful programming can become. Tours are often a more realistic starting point, requiring only a few volunteered hours to set up. These tours can be introductory tours of the cemetery, tours focusing on notable persons buried in the cemetery, military history tours, headstone design tours, and even holiday themed tours, like a ghost story tour for Halloween. Research for these tours can come from information gained through the adopt a plot program, making them even easier to prepare. If your cemetery is large enough to host runs, such as a 5k, these can also be themed and typically include a fee for entry. If not, exercise events like yoga can be a much more peaceful alternative to bring athletics into your cemetery and raise funds, since yoga classes are typically paid. Movie nights can also be held in the cemetery, utilizing an outdoor projector, and can also be themed. Drive-ins can charge similar admission fees to that

⁵² Cemetery Dogs.

of movie theaters, and you should be able to do so as well, perhaps even more for a unique ambiance and theme.

All of these ideas are barely the tip of the iceberg regarding events which may be held in your cemetery. Creativity will go a long way in event planning, as well as good partnerships, allowing for a wider variety of events at a lower cost to you. Any event held in your community should lead you to question if it could be done in a cemetery, and if so, try and have the event held in your cemetery in the future. Always be willing to ask “Why not?” and you will begin to develop successful events for your cemetery.

2017 SCHEDULE OF TOURS & EVENTS

Please note that all dates and times are subject to change or cancellation, and that this list is not comprehensive. For the most up-to-date events calendar, please see Congressional Cemetery's website: www.congressionalcemetery.org.

Month	Date	Event	Cost
JANUARY	Tue., 17 + 6:30 PM	<i>Tombs and Tomes Book Club</i>	DONATION
	Sat., 25 + 1 PM	<i>New Docent Information Session</i>	FREE
FEBRUARY	Tue., 14 + 6:30 PM	<i>Tombs and Tomes Book Club</i>	DONATION
	Sat., 1 + 11 AM	<i>Introductory Docent-Led Tour</i>	FREE
MARCH	Mon., 3 + 3 PM	<i>Funeral & Burial Pre-Planning Workshop</i>	FREE
	Sat., 8 + 11 AM	<i>Introductory Docent-Led Tour</i>	FREE
APRIL	Sun., 9 + 4 PM	<i>Notes from the Crypt: Chamber Music in the Chapel</i>	FREE
	Sat., 15 + 11 AM	<i>Introductory Docent-Led Tour</i>	FREE
MAY	Sat., 15 + 1 PM	<i>Civil War Tour</i>	FREE
	Sat., 22 + 11 AM	<i>Annual Meeting</i>	FREE
JUNE	Sat., 22 & Sun., 23	<i>Operation Conservation Workshop</i>	\$
	Sat., 22 + 11 AM	<i>Introductory Docent-Led Tour</i>	FREE
JULY	Sat., 29 + 11 AM	<i>Introductory Docent-Led Tour</i>	FREE
	Sat., 6 + 11 AM	<i>Introductory Docent-Led Tour</i>	FREE
AUGUST	Sat., 13 + 10 AM - 3 PM	<i>Day of the Dog 5k and Festival</i>	\$/FREE*
	Sat., 13 + 11 AM	<i>Introductory Docent-Led Tour</i>	FREE
SEPTEMBER	Sun., 14 + 4 PM	<i>Notes from the Crypt: Chamber Music in the Chapel</i>	FREE
	Tue., 16 + 6:30 PM	<i>Tombs and Tomes Book Club</i>	DONATION
OCTOBER	Sat., 20 + 11 AM	<i>Introductory Docent-Led Tour</i>	FREE
	Sat., 20 + 1 PM	<i>Civil War Tour</i>	FREE
NOVEMBER	Sat., 21 + 11 AM	<i>Introductory Docent-Led Tour</i>	FREE
	Sat., 21 + 6 PM - 9 PM	<i>Civil War Tour</i>	FREE
DECEMBER	Fri., 22 + 7:30 PM	<i>Cinematery Movie Night</i>	FREE
	Sat., 23 + 11 AM	<i>Introductory Docent-Led Tour</i>	FREE
JANUARY	Sat., 23 + 11 AM	<i>Introductory Docent-Led Tour</i>	FREE
	Sat., 30 + 11 AM	<i>Introductory Docent-Led Tour</i>	FREE
FEBRUARY	Sat., 2 + 11 AM	<i>Introductory Docent-Led Tour</i>	FREE
	Sat., 9 + 11 AM	<i>Introductory Docent-Led Tour</i>	FREE
MARCH	Sat., 9 + 8 AM - 12 PM	<i>Day of Service</i>	FREE
	Tues., 12 + 6:30 PM	<i>Tombs and Tomes Book Club</i>	DONATION
APRIL	Sat., 16 + 11 AM	<i>Introductory Docent-Led Tour</i>	FREE
	Sat., 16 + 1 PM	<i>Civil War Tour</i>	FREE
MAY	Fri., 22 + 7:30 PM	<i>Cinematery Movie Night</i>	FREE
	Sat., 23 + 11 AM	<i>Introductory Docent-Led Tour</i>	FREE
JUNE	Sat., 30 + 11 AM	<i>Introductory Docent-Led Tour</i>	FREE
	Sat., 7 + 11 AM	<i>Introductory Docent-Led Tour</i>	FREE
JULY	Sat., 7 + 5 PM	<i>Dead Man's Run: 5K Race and Kids Fun Run</i>	\$
	Sat., 14 + 11 AM	<i>Introductory Docent-Led Tour</i>	FREE
AUGUST	Fri., 20 + 6 PM - 9 PM	<i>Soul Strolls: Twilight Tours</i>	\$
	Sat., 21 + 11 AM	<i>Introductory Docent-Led Tour</i>	FREE
SEPTEMBER	Sat., 21 + 1 PM	<i>Civil War Tour</i>	FREE
	Sat., 21 + 6 PM - 9 PM	<i>Soul Strolls: Twilight Tours</i>	\$
OCTOBER	Fri., 27 + 6 PM - 9 PM	<i>Soul Strolls: Twilight Tours</i>	\$
	Sat., 28 + 11 AM	<i>Introductory Docent-Led Tour</i>	FREE
NOVEMBER	Sat., 28 + 6 PM - 9 PM	<i>Soul Strolls: Twilight Tours</i>	\$
	Mon., 6 + 10:45 AM	<i>Sousa's Birthday Celebration</i>	FREE
DECEMBER	Tues. 14 + 6:30 PM	<i>Tombs and Tomes Book Club</i>	DONATION
	Sat., 2 + 10 AM - 3 PM	<i>Photos with Santa</i>	\$



* Day of the Dog is a free event, while the 5K has a registration fee.



HISTORIC CONGRESSIONAL CEMETERY

1801 E Street, SE, Washington, D.C. 20003
www.congressionalcemetery.org

Congressional Cemetery 2017 Schedule of events, showing multiple events almost every weekend of the Spring, Summer, and Fall months of the year.

Taken from: <http://www.congressionalcemetery.org/pdf/2017-Events-Pamphlet.pdf>

Sales

Creating an online store, or even gift shop, can also be a good way to raise funds. The profits from these sales can go directly to the cemetery, and can even be more specific, based on category of item. For example, the Vom Tode online store sells miniature decorative headstones,



Wares from the Vom Tode store, including Support your Local Cemetery Pin and miniature headstones.

Taken from:

<http://vomtode.bigcartel.com/product/support-you-local-cemetery-1-5-inch-button>

with all proceeds going towards the Adopt a Plot program at Linden Grove cemetery.⁵³ Another idea for a physical gift shop is to simply sell flowers for people to put on graves when they are visiting. This could also work online, with people requesting which graves to decorate with flowers. Other items you may wish to sell can include books, including those with subject matter relevant to your cemetery, such as notable internments, the era of your cemetery, the location of your cemetery, or even just books on cemeteries in general. Should you choose to do programming in your cemetery, you can also sell accessories and apparel relating to specific programs; including T-shirts, tote bags, lanyards, and stickers or buttons. If your cemetery is in a remote location, you may also wish to sell snacks and beverages. When it comes to sale items, thinking of your cemetery like a tourist attraction, such as a museum, can help to generate product ideas.

⁵³ Vom Tode.

Locating Descendants

Legally, a burial plot is passed down to the descendants of its owner in perpetuity. Therefore, locating a descendant can allow you to find the legal owner of the plot. This is good to attempt before making repairs or replacing stones, as the descendant may have an opinion on what is done with the stone. The descendant may also be willing to help pay for repairs, feeling a sense of honor for their ancestors. This may also bring new visitors to the cemetery who will actively care about its future, being the final home of someone important to them. This could also include the forms of maintenance which is often done by families, such as light stone cleaning, plant trimming, and placing flowers on the grave. Descendants may also be interested in donating some form of endowment, ensuring the preservation of their ancestor's final resting place for as long as they are able.

It can be difficult to locate descendants, with no clear-cut path to finding them. One possibility is to look for the author of family trees which include your cemetery's inhabitants. Websites including Ancestry.com often include information from family trees in the search results, and enable you to message the author of the tree. The benefits of this method include an already active interest in genealogy, potentially leading to more interested descendants.⁵⁴ You may also leave a notice with the updated internment list at the local genealogy center, informing those looking at the list that you are interested in meeting descendants of those interred, including some form of contact information. This is mostly limited to local descendants, since few people will travel across the country to locate an ancestors home place. While few and far between, these people do exist, and are often much more excited to find their history than others.

This private tree contains information about:

William DEVERUX FITZPATRICK

Born: 1150 in England

You will also find attached to this person

1 sources

179066 people in this member tree

CONTACT DPING192

Ancestry.com contact option after searching member trees for a name, William Fitzpatrick in this instance.

Taken from: Ancestry.com

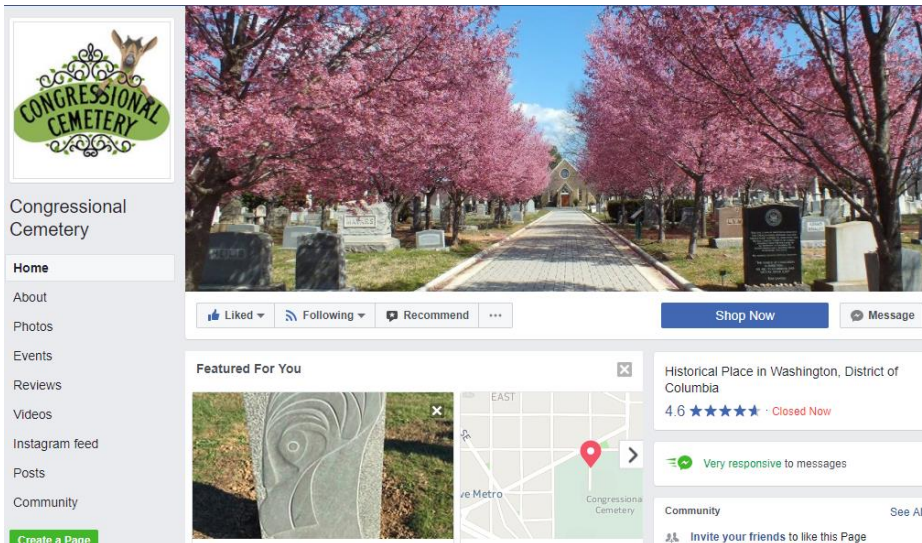
A more complicated method is to follow the will records located in the local probate archive. Starting with the original owner, you can attempt to trace the burial site down through descendants to a potential current owner. From here it may be more difficult to find the current owner, unless they still happen to live in the area. Oftentimes, locating descendants happens largely by chance, and may take several years. If a descendant is known for an internment, always be sure to inform them of all efforts which will affect their plot, such as probing, use of GPR, and monument repairs. It is also a good idea to ask for permission, to protect against future claims of unwanted change.

⁵⁴ Ancestry.

Social Media Presence

Having a social media presence is one of the most important aspects of any organization today. Many people look at an organizations Facebook page before their website, and are more likely to check back in on the organization if these updates are automatically sent to their feed via one click of a button. Social media also allows people to stay updated on your cemetery from across the globe. You are able to reach a much wider audience, as people will be able to share your post, allowing more and more people to see it and potentially spark an interest in your cemetery. This method can also locate descendants, although is it purely by chance in these instances.

Facebook pages are often the most effective platform to reach older generations. The first step for a good Facebook page is to create an organization page, rather than posting to your own personal page. Organization pages have a section for a brief description of what the organization is, which often includes a location and contact info. There is also a section to post events, which can draw many more people to your event, since people are notified when a friend is interested in an event. The community is also able to post as a visitor to this page, allowing your organization to receive information in addition to providing it. By liking this page, posts show in an individual's timeline, making them much more likely to see a post. The tricky part of this is to get people to actually read a post. Here, photos and videos are more likely to grab attention than text, since people are more likely to see the image first and then read the text if they are interested. The number of posts put out also increase the likelihood that someone will read a post, as they are more likely to see one post out of many. Be careful not to post too frequently though, since this may seem like spam and cause some people to unlike the page.⁵⁵



Congressional Cemetery Facebook Page. Includes an about section, photos, events, reviews, videos, a link to their Instagram page, a link to their online store, posts by the cemetery, and community posts about the cemetery. Taken from: Facebook.com

⁵⁵ Facebook.

To reach a younger generation, Instagram is often more successful than Facebook. Instagram is also a little more nuanced, because you are only able to post photos and videos. By following a page on Instagram, posts are also added to an individual's feed. However, since posts are exclusively images, the images have to be of a higher quality for people to actually pay attention to them. It is also not possible for community input, as only you are able to post to your page. Mastering the art of hashtags will also make your posts more visible, with people able to search for a specific tag. Again here, too many tags can make a person feel that a post is spam, and will be less likely to view it.⁵⁶

Many successful organizations utilize a social media person, who exclusively updates the organization's social media pages, including posting, responding to messages and comments, and liking and commenting on other posts. This is very impractical for small organizations, but should be kept in mind when choosing who will run the social media pages. You may even wish to research successful organizations to see their posing style. Some postings suggested for a cemetery organization page include images of the cemetery, such as headstones, especially ones with nice details, plantings, and events. With these images, you can provide information about the history of the person interred or the design features of the stone. Event postings can also show people how successful your event was, making them more likely to attend future events. Links to articles on cemetery preservation, posts by other cemeteries, and information on cemetery inhabitants can also be successful. It is important to think of your social media pages as a community, and treat your postings similarly to information you are sharing with someone in your physical community. Maintaining a level of professionalism while still seeming personal can go a long way towards a successful social media presence.



The Congressional Cemetery Instagram page. Includes short description, link to website, and photos.

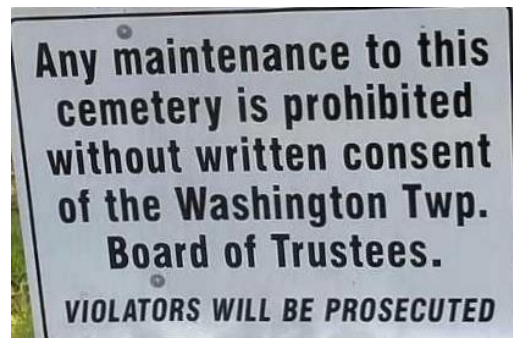
Taken from: Instagram.com

⁵⁶ Instagram.

Transferral to a Governing Body

As a last resort, if you are unable to successfully raise funds and care for your cemetery, the property can be transferred to a governing body. There are cemeteries which are owned by cities, townships, counties, and even states all across the country. These cemeteries are typically minimally maintained, with only regular mowing and access made available. Some cemeteries are transferred to the government until an organization is able to take over care of the cemetery. Upon finding a governing body which is interested in ownership of the cemetery, the body will order receivership of the cemetery. This is also typically done with the death of a property owner, unless this owner specifies to whom the land will go before the time of their death.

Before taking this step, visit other municipality owned cemeteries to see the level of care taken by that governing body. If you feel that you can do a better job than they are, you may decide not to transfer ownership after all. If available, you can also check the municipality's budget for cemetery care to ensure that there are adequate funds for your cemetery. Upon transfer, you will lose all rights to the land so be sure to obtain permission before making any improvements to the cemetery. At the Vance Family Cemetery, located in Brown County, Ohio, the township does not



Sign prohibiting cemetery maintenance at the Vance Family Cemetery.

Taken from: Person Photos

take care of the cemetery at an equal level to the original owner did, and they do not allow anyone to make improvements that is not a township employee. There is even a sign posted at the entrance stating this rule. This is an example of a time that receivership was not a good idea. In other instances, including Linden Grove in Covington, Kentucky, the receivership helps bring the cemetery back to its former glory, transforming it from an active drug ring location to a vibrant community resource. If the municipality really does care and have the funds to do so, receivership can save a cemetery that would otherwise continue to deteriorate.

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