

NCA HISTORY PROGRAM

1. REASON FOR ISSUE: To establish policy, responsibilities, and management direction for the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) History Program.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS:

a. This directive establishes policy and responsibilities for gathering, maintaining and protecting NCA historical records and artifacts, conducting historic research and providing professional analysis for internal and external audiences, interpreting resources and exhibits, and complying with requirements of related authorities.

b. This directive includes appendices that provide procedural and other guidance related to Notable Burials, donating to the NCA History Collection, Oral History Interview Agreement and Deed of Gift, List of NCA Building Types, Structures and Objects, and information about Standard Plaques, Signage and Tablets.

3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: National Cemetery Administration, History Program (44D), 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420, is responsible for the contents of this directive. Questions may be referred to the Senior Historian, NCA History Program.

4. RELATED PUBLICATIONS:

a. VA Directive 7777, Implementation of the VA History Program (Feb. 9, 2021);

b. *Federal Register* Notice, "The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes" (63 FR 20496, Apr. 24, 1998);

c. *Federal Register* Notice, "The Secretary of the Interior's Historic Preservation Professional Qualification Standards" (62 FR 33708, Jun. 20, 1997);

d. Executive Order 13287, *Preserve America*, Section 3, Improving Federal Agency Planning and Accountability (Mar. 3, 2000);

e. NCA Directive 3160, Gifts And Donations To VA National Cemeteries (Mar. 3, 2021);

f. NCA Handbook 3160.02, Processing Donations Of Standardized Memorial Monuments, Plaques, Benches And Trees; Fallen Soldier Displays (Jan. 15, 2019);

- g. NCA Handbook 3160.03, Processing Donations Of Non-Standardized Commemorative Works And Carillons (May 19, 2021);
- h. NCA Directive 3211 Eligibility Authorities and Administration of Memorial Benefits (May 5, 2021);
- i. NCA Directive 6300, NCA Records and Information Management (Mar.13, 2018);
- j. NCA Directive 7545, Cultural Resources Management at VA National Cemeteries (Jan. 4, 2019);
- k. Field Programs, Standard Operational Procedures 13, Replacement of Government Furnished Headstone Markers and Medallions (Sept. 30, 2021).

5. RESCISSIONS:

- a. NCA Notice 2005-04, History Program (Aug. 26, 2005);
- b. NCA Notice 2006-01, Notable Persons Interred or Memorialized in VA National Cemeteries (Jan. 24, 2006);
- c. NCA Notice 2006-03, Reporting Memorials in VA National Cemeteries (May 1, 2006);
- d. Memorandum, Office of Field Programs, New Memorials in Cemeteries (Oct. 27, 2004);
- e. Memorandum, Senior Historian to Director, Field Programs – Review of Medal of Honor Headstone Requests (Mar. 10, 2010);
- f. Memo, S. E. Benson, New *Bivouac of the Dead* Tablets (Mar. 11, 2003).

6. RECERTIFICATION: This document is scheduled for recertification on or before the last day of April 2028.

/s/
Matthew T. Quinn
Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs

Distribution: Electronic

NCA HISTORY PROGRAM

1. PURPOSE/AUTHORITY: The purpose of this National Cemetery Administration (NCA) Directive is to:

a. Define NCA History Program responsibilities associated with Federal burial or memorialization benefits and the associated identification and retention of written and oral history records that document the administrative history of NCA and establish policies, responsibilities, and management direction of the NCA History Program;

b. Clarify NCA personnel responsibilities of documenting, preserving, and utilizing historical resources for research purposes, central office and field support, public education, and outreach;

c. Establish mandatory policy in compliance with Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) and title 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 800—Protection of Historic Properties.

2. BACKGROUND:

a. This directive prescribes the primary activities for the NCA History Program and outlines roles and responsibilities for NCA historians and other personnel designated or assigned duties to support the preservation and documentation of NCA history.

b. The NCA History Program will establish administrative-wide accountability for the protection and promotion of NCA historical archives, artifacts, and cultural resources. While mission needs of NCA are the primary focus of the NCA History Program, its historians will also coordinate and support work with other VA historians and serve as representatives of NCA to the VA History Office (VAHO) and the National VA History Center (NVAHC) in Dayton, Ohio.

3. POLICY: It is NCA policy to protect and preserve its historical resources (including reference and working-file documentation, artifacts, research products and other records) in compliance with all Federal requirements, and to document its history to guide NCA leaders and tell the story to VA leadership, employees, Veterans, other Federal agencies, and the public at-large.

a. NCA employees will preserve and manage historic records (including those of predecessor agencies) and the collection of historical archives and artifacts;

b. NCA leaders will maintain a professional historical capability consisting of a formal office, the NCA History Program, to document, analyze and advance an understanding of the history of NCA and its predecessors;

c. The NCA History Program will coordinate historical activities with the VA History Office and comply with its guidance, protocols, and procedures for the VA Administrations.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES:

a. **NCA Chief of Staff and Deputy Under Secretaries** are responsible for providing the History Program with appropriate decision papers and primary source materials that document the evolution of NCA, such as major policy changes or additions (e.g., changes to cemetery establishment criteria), new memorial products or services (e.g., the medallion), major organizational changes (e.g., establishment of a new office), significant events (e.g., anniversaries, cemetery dedications), and key publications (e.g., annual budget volume, statistical summary; latest Long Range Plan, Functional Organizational Manual). Where appropriate, these materials should be shared electronically and existing processes utilized to facilitate recurring access by the History Program. The Chief of Staff will work with the Deputy Under Secretaries and the History Program to retain relevant items.

b. **Executive Director, Office of Engagement and Memorial Innovations (OEMI)** is responsible for:

(1) Managing and requesting personnel, financial and IT resources for the NCA History and historic-resource awareness activities;

(2) Involving NCA Historians as needed in planning for new OEMI products and participating on work teams, and ensuring that products (programs, photos, ephemera) associated with dedications (i.e., cemetery, memorial monument) and special events are retained for the NCA History Collection;

(3) Supporting participation of NCA historians in the development of NCA content for the Dayton NVAHC and participation in VAHO programs and meetings;

(4) Assessing the adequacy and effectiveness of the NCA History Program and implementing improvements relating to history-based products, digitization of records, collection management, and preservation of historic resources;

(5) Engaging NCA program office leadership to provide the NCA History Program with unofficial and official records that support development of NCA's administrative history; and ensuring NCA Historians have access to correspondence and record-management programs to maintain key decisional documents for research purposes for historical studies and to aid in the response to queries coming from Congress, VA or other Federal agencies, media or public.

c. **Deputy Director, OEMI** is responsible for:

(1) Managing and overseeing operations of the NCA History Program;

(2) Establishing policies and procedures to implement the NCA History Program that ensure NCA processes related to all aspects of historical and cultural materials and resources in compliance with VA Directive 7777 (History) and other policies or plans (i.e., interpretation and collections) implemented by the VAHO;

(3) Overseeing development of historical interpretation and other public education programs promoting the history of VA's national cemeteries, to include interpretative materials such as print publications, physical installations at interpretative facilities and cemeteries (on-site waysides, wall panels, exhibits, self-led tour materials, formal staff-led programs), and electronic or digital media (website content, virtual exhibits, web-based videos and virtual tours);

(4) Ensuring that the NCA History Program is involved in the development of history-based education materials by the Veterans Legacy Program (VLP) and ensuring VLP activities are synchronized with history program efforts such as interpretation, and that VLP products and documentation are added to the History Collection;

(5) Overseeing the development of an NCA Interpretation Plan;

(6) Overseeing the development of an NCA Collections Plan.

d. NCA Senior Historian is responsible for:

(1) Working collaboratively with NCA Chief of Staff and Deputy Under Secretaries to identify subject areas for which information is needed for the NCA History Collection.

(2) Serving as the authority for the following history-related programmatic issues:

(i) Conducting, as-needed, administrative research using reference, pre-decisional working-file and finalized or published documentation of NCA program office records (official and unofficial) of historic relevance;

(ii) Primary and secondary research on subjects relevant to NCA history;

(iii) Review of NCA history paper and digital web-based publications for accuracy of content and drafting of NCA paper and associated digital web content;

(iv) Management, accountability, and expansion of the NCA History Collection (see Appendix B) to include of artifacts (i.e., headstones, signage), archives (digital and paper content (i.e., photographs, architectural drawings, studies, ephemera), and oral histories;

(v) Content and location for existing and proposed NCA history-based interpretative signage, installations, and exhibits at VA or NCA facilities or for placement on non-VA property, in coordination with VA Office of Construction and Facilities Management or others;

(vi) VA and NCA projects, programs, and initiatives involving history programs and administrative methodology, and historic preservation; including participation in system-wide visitor-use studies and certain educational initiatives involving historic resources;

(vii) Performing as the NCA liaison for cemetery history and associated resources managed by the American Battlefield Monuments Commission, Department of Defense, and Department of the Interior-National Park Service;

(viii) Providing accountability for incoming objects loaned to NCA or NCA artifacts loaned to external hosts and related agreements, and the transfer of NCA objects and artifacts for storage and preservation at the NVAHC;

(ix) Communicating with the VA Chief Historian, NVAHC staff, VBA and VHA historians, the VA Federal Preservation Officer and staff in the VA Historic Preservation Office, and NCA Federal Preservation Officer (aka Historical Architect/Section 106 Coordinator) about topics that involve NCA resources.

e. NCA History Program Staff is responsible for:

(1) Recording NCA's official history and that of its predecessor agencies, to include conducting primary and secondary research at Federal and other repositories about the origins of NCA policies, products, and properties, and the events and individuals associated with them (including interments);

(2) Preparing, cataloging, and archiving printed and digital (video, audio, and other electronic formats) histories of major NCA actions, including the history of NCA predecessor agencies;

(3) Preparing pamphlets, books, monographs, articles, catalogues, chronologies, bibliographies, and special studies of importance to the Department for public and stakeholder benefit;

(4) Facilitating, on behalf of NCA and in accordance with VA and NCA policy, the acceptance of material gifts and donations (such as oral history interviews, personal papers, artifacts, archival materials, and ephemera) that support the NCA mission;

(5) Accounting for all NCA monuments and carillons by recording new donations within 30 days of installation and coordinating an annual verification by cemetery directors, reviewing all proposed inscriptions for monuments and carillons for accuracy and appropriateness (see, NCA Handbooks 3160.02 and 3160.03);

(6) Coordinating with Cemetery and District Directors/Executive Directors to advise on the appropriate methods to conserve, repair, or otherwise treat historic memorial monuments and plaques based on existing conditions (normal aging, accident) or Facility Condition Assessment grades, prior to NCA contracting for services or undertaking any work;

(7) Producing historical studies to aid decision-makers in evaluating current and proposed policies, and providing assistance and input on NCA historical, archival and historic preservation matters;

(8) Establishing and maintaining working relationships with VA and NCA program office leaders, Records Management Officers, Federal Preservation Officers, and external partners for historic materials, to include other Federal history program offices and professional and academic groups;

(9) Reviewing scopes, maintaining oversight, and providing concurrence on all history and archival projects initiated by NCA. These projects include, but are not limited to, the digitization of historical records, writing/publication of products with a historical focus, publishing specialized histories, curation of collections and local exhibition of historic artifacts. This may be accomplished in collaboration with NCA stakeholders with overlapping responsibilities (Records Management Officers, NCA Federal Preservation Officer, NCA Central Office, Privacy Officers, and Office of General Counsel librarians, etc.);

(10) Promoting stewardship throughout VA and NCA through advocacy for and training on the conservation and repair, ongoing reuse and preservation of NCA buildings, structures, objects, and cultural landscapes (i.e., the national cemeteries, soldiers' lots);

(11) Supporting NCA Design and Construction Service, NCA Federal Preservation Officer, to promote preservation programs that collect, identify, evaluate, preserve, and plan for the long-term protection of NCA's historic properties, resources, and materials;

(12) Classifying and maintaining an inventory of historic resources located in NCA cemeteries for various purposes (e.g., in support of cross-Service functions, National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) nominations), and updating, as necessary, the list of NCA's historic buildings, structures, objects, archeological sites, and artwork contained in VA's Capital Asset Inventory (CAI) system;

(13) Promoting and expanding the Oral History component of the NCA History Collection, which involves but is not limited to, contacting VA and NCA employees, aligning interviews with VA History Office goals, acquiring donation records, having audio tapes transcribed as needed, and related documentation (Appendix C);

(14) Managing the content, accuracy, and consistency of notable decedents in a single, comprehensive electronic compilation list and publishing individuals on cemetery web pages (including those identified by VLP); reviewing new and revised submissions for notable decedents; updating internal spreadsheets and cemetery home pages; and providing content to other OEMI programs for digital publishing (Appendix A);

(15) Reviewing requests for new or replacement Government-issued headstones and markers for Medal of Honor recipients buried in VA and non-VA cemeteries for historic accuracy and appropriateness (i.e., identity, headstone style, supplemental plaque);

(16) Verifying requests for replacement of "historic" Government-issued headstones and markers for Veterans buried in VA cemeteries for definition of 'error of fact' and resulting in the appropriate and accurate burial product and inscription for the

individual's military service, specifically when the decedent's date of death as shown on the headstone or marker (or, if more than one decedent, the earliest date of death shown) is 50 years or more prior to the date of the request for errors of fact (see, Field Programs, 41-SOP-013, Procedures for Replacing Government-Furnished Headstone, Markers, and Medallions));

(17) Advising NCA offices about the preservation and replacement of standard, non-monument objects in VA cemeteries to include the Gettysburg Address tablet, Memorial Day Act tablet, "Bivouac of the Dead" verse and other historic signage (Appendix D);

(18) Providing appropriate annual training to VA employees at the National Training Center, and staff assigned collateral duties related to the identification and retention of relevant historical archives and artifacts and educating NCA officials and managers about the value of institutional history and its preservation;

(19) Coordinating with the NCA Records Management Office to review materials that may be kept by the NCA History Program for its collection and obtaining copies of record schedule materials submitted to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

f. Executive Director, Cemetery Operations is responsible for:

(1) Ensuring the History Program has access to GIS/GPS documentation and First Notice of Event (FNOE) and similar communication when it involves historic resources (buildings, structures, objects, landscapes).

(2) Reviewing, upon request, the content of draft interpretive signage, preservation-planning documentation, and other products developed by the NCA History Program to improve outreach and promote the preservation of historic cemeteries.

g. Cemetery Directors are responsible for:

(1) Relaying research questions to the NCA History Program (to include correspondence, photographs, site maps, headstone photos, etc.) and indicating if there is a sensitive aspect to the inquiry (time, event, VIP);

(2) Coordinating with the NCA History Program to review proposed individual or organizational volunteer service projects (i.e., Scouts) to determine potential effects on historic cemetery resources and obtain guidance or recommendations on the most appropriate products, designs, practices, materials, supplies (i.e., bristle versus plastic brushes to clean headstones), and upon completion of projects, provide a completion report to the Senior Historian;

(3) Reviewing the criteria for decedents to be considered a notable burial and submitting recommendations to the NCA History Program for new (or revised) notable decedents using the Checklist (Appendix A);

(4) Coordinating with NCA History Program and other NCA program offices to determine the appropriate location for interpretive signage or waysides; installing and maintaining the signage; reporting condition and structural issues (i.e., struck by maintenance equipment); reporting missing signage;

(5) Cooperating with historians to develop exhibit content for interpretative waysides and for new and existing public areas of cemetery buildings;

(6) Coordinating with the NCA History Program on requests for replacement of “historic” Government-furnished headstones or markers (decedent’s date of death is 50+ years ago) in VA cemeteries to ensure that the appropriate product is used and that the inscription is accurate based on date of death;

(7) Coordinating with the NCA History Program to obtain assistance to conserve, repair, or otherwise treat historic memorial monuments and plaques based on existing conditions (normal aging, accident) or Facility Condition Assessment grades, prior to contracting for services or undertaking any work, to verify the need for appropriate treatments to NCA memorial monuments which are designated as historic objects regardless of their age and ensure appropriate outcomes.

h. Director, Cemetery Development and Improvement Service is responsible for providing the NCA History Program with background and findings based on individual Research and Development projects that are suggested, tested, rejected or realized to improve operational activities.

i. District Executive Directors are responsible for communicating with the NCA History Program staff about aspects of any Non-Recurring Maintenance and Mini-Minor, and Minor projects or other projects managed by the district that have a potential adverse impact on NCA cemeteries that are listed on or eligible for listing on the NRHP, with the goal of minimizing such impacts; managing planned or inadvertent outcomes relating to heritage assets (historic memorial monuments, tablets/plaques, gates) and documentation of and transfer of historic resources to the NCA History Collection.

j. Director, Memorial Products Service is responsible for:

(1) Coordinating with the NCA History Program as needed regarding new or replacement Government-furnished headstone or marker requests for the graves of Medal of Honor recipients buried in VA and non-VA cemeteries and ensuring they are reviewed by the NCA History Program for accuracy and appropriateness (i.e., headstone style, supplemental plaque);

(2) Coordinating with the NCA History Program on requests for replacement of “historic” Government-furnished headstones or markers (decedent’s date of death is 50+ years ago) in VA cemeteries to ensure the appropriate product is used and that the inscription is accurate based on date of death(see, Field Programs, 41-SOP-013, Procedures for Replacing Government-Furnished Headstone, Markers, and Medallions));;

(3) Providing the NCA History Program with digital copies of all documentation and materials associated with the acceptance, rejection, or other outcome for all Emblems of Belief (EOBs) proposed to NCA;

(4) Providing the NCA History Program with copies of records (correspondence, emails, drawings, studies, photographs) and objects (rejected or approved models, mock-ups) and records about new memorial products and associated policies (i.e., medallion, memorial wall, MOH “plaque”) that documents NCA’s decisional process from concept to available burial benefit.

k. Director, Veterans Cemetery Grants Program is responsible for providing the NCA History Program with an annual (fiscal year) list of the grants it awarded to state and tribal applicants (value, recipients, purpose) and a list of grant projects completed in the calendar year for retention in the NCA History Collection.

l. Director, NCA Performance Analysis and Planning Service is responsible for providing the NCA History Program with data relevant to NCA historic properties, heritage assets or other relevant programmatic matters.

m. Director, Design and Construction Service (DCS) is responsible for:

(1) Providing the NCA History Program with digital copies of DUSM-generated final and pre-decisional work products that have potential historic value for research purposes, including but not limited to cemetery development (land, design) and transfer of physical resources;

(2) Coordinating with NCA Historians to ensure the priority of preservation through repair, rehabilitation, restoration, and reuse of NCA historic buildings, structures, objects, and cultural landscapes that are listed on or eligible for listing on the NRHP using qualified personnel or contractors per Section 112, NHPA, or if reuse is not an option, that appropriate permanent documentation is undertaken prior to removal as part of Section 106 consultation by the NCA Federal Preservation Officer;

(3) Serving as a liaison between Office of Construction and Facilities Management (OCFM) and NCA History Program to provide edits or updates as needed related to NCA interpretive signs and standards for the VA Signage Design Guide;

n. NCA Records Management Officer is responsible for:

(1) Maintaining communication and coordinating with the NCA Senior Historian to advance the productivity of the NCA History Program, especially in the areas of overlapping responsibility and those outlined in this document for the NCA History Program (Paragraph 4.g. of VA Directive 7777);

(2) Offering access to all *unofficial* records that Historians may determine are reference and working-file documentation essential to recording NCA administrative history for potential retention in the NCA History Collection;

(3) Referring *official* records for review by NCA historians for potential duplication and accession into NCA Collections for the purpose of reference and research, prior to transfer to NARA;

(4) Coordinating records review and determination of utilization with the NCA Privacy Officer.

o. NCA Federal Preservation Officer is responsible for:

(1) Coordinating with NCA historians for Section 106 purposes, which includes but is not limited to developing scopes of work for historic resource treatments; determining professional qualifications of contractors and service providers; reviewing work products that document historic landscapes, buildings, structures, and objects (i.e., mitigation, cultural landscape reports, agreement documents); and routing final deliverables to all relevant NCA offices for retention;

(2) Providing the NCA History Program with paper and/or digital copies of all final historic-resource studies, investigations, assessments, and treatment records (i.e., archeological report, cultural landscape study) funded by VA as part of any project or external mitigation project, for retention in the NCA History Collection.

5. REFERENCES:

- a. 54 U.S.C. Chapter 3201, Policy and Administrative Provisions (2021).
- b. 54 U.S.C. Chapter 3203, Monuments, Ruins, Sites, and Objects of Antiquity (2021).
- c. 16 U.S.C. §§ 431-433. Antiquities Act of 1906.
- d. 49 Stat. 666, 16 U.S.C. §§ 461-467. Historic Sites Act of 1935, as amended.
- e. P.L. 102-575. Federal Records Act of 1950, as amended.
- f. P.L. 89-665. The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended.
- g. P.L. 93-291. Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974.
- h. P.L. 93-579. The Privacy Act of 1974, as amended.
- i. P.L. 96-95. Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, as amended.
- j. P.L. 101-601. Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990.
- k. 38 CFR Part 38
- l. VA Directive 7545, Cultural Resources Management Procedures.

m. VA Directive 7531, Acquisition of Artwork, Decorative Furnishings and Decorative Items.

n. VA Directive 7777 Implementation of the VA History Program.

o. NCA Directive 6300, NCA Records and Information Management (March, 13, 2018).

p. Field Programs, 41-SOP-13, Procedures for Replacing Government-Furnished Headstone, Markers, and Medallions.

6. DEFINITIONS.

a. **Accessions.** Items added to an existing collection to ensure accountability.

b. **Administration history and selected background materials.** A written account of a Federal office based on official and primary records, and materials gathered in the creation of Administration-history products, including oral histories organized by agency historians and others; and select background materials obtained and used in the creation of projects that warrant periodic historical review may be retained as part of the working file.

c. **Archival materials.** Works on paper and other media, to include correspondence, diaries, papers, photographs, postcards, architectural drawings, computer files, scrapbooks, financial and administration decisional records, and other material deemed by historians as valuable for the information they contain.

d. **Archives.** A collection of relevant historical documents or records providing information about people, places, institutions, and events. Also, the place where such documents or records are stored and made available to researchers.

e. **Artifact.** An object, man-made or naturally formed, that is of cultural or historical interest. Examples include signage, headstones removed from the cemetery, architectural remnants, flag holders and flags, tools and decorative objects. They have clearly established origins and relate to historical events or subjects, in this case to NCA and its predecessor agencies.

f. **Digital.** Records, archives, media, projects, activities, responsibilities, etc., involving or making use of computer devices, data or media in creation, function or preservation.

g. **Ephemera.** Items of collectible memorabilia, typically written or printed, that were originally expected to have only short-term value or interest (for instance, pamphlets, postcards, and posters).

h. **Historic.** The federal definition of "historic" is that the object, building, structure, site or landscape is at least 50 years old. This is based on one of the most commonly accepted principles within American historic preservation, that properties must be at

least 50 years old to be eligible for listing in the NRHP. However, in an important deviation from that, the Keeper of the NRHP in 2011 issued a Clarification of Policy that says all *developed burial sections of all national cemeteries* are eligible for the NRHP *regardless of age*. Eligibility for and actual NRHP listing invokes the same consultation requirements.

i. **Historical records.** Documentary material having historical value for its content, association, and or age.

j. **Interpretation.** A mission-based communication process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and the meanings inherent in the resource. Interpretive products include digital exhibits, on-site wayside signage, printed handouts.

k. **NCA History Office Ready-Reference Files.** Records that NCA historians and others identify as having unusual or immediately recognizable historical significance and are filed among other records that are scheduled for disposal, will be reproduced or removed for retention from the file before transfer or destruction.

l. **Oral history.** Oral history is the collection and study of historical information about individuals, families, important events, or everyday life using audio or video recordings of interviews. Recordings are transcribed, summarized, or indexed and then accessioned in a library or archives for historical research to complement textual records.

m. **Records schedule.** Per Federal law, records schedules set retention requirements for records documenting administrative and program functions common to several or all government agencies. Examples include personnel, accounting, and general administration.

APPENDIX A – Notable Burials

1. **GENERAL INFORMATION:** The NCA History Program manages the authoritative and official list of decedents designated as Notable Burials in NCA cemeteries. NCA History Program staff will manage modifications to the “Notable Burials” list based on primary research and other sources, and they will provide current information to the appropriate office to publish on Intranet and Internet pages.

The Notable Burials Intranet spreadsheet is read-only and is for internal-use only. The most current spreadsheet of the inventory is available at the NCA Intranet History Program homepage. The general public accesses Notable Burial information on individual cemetery web pages and on the Veterans Legacy Memorial.

Although all Veterans interred or memorialized in VA cemeteries are important because of their service to the country, individuals who fall under one or more of the following criteria are considered extraordinary due to singular accomplishments or the circumstances of their life or death. The historians’ ongoing review and revision of these individuals and implementation of the criteria will ensure consistency in the designation of individuals as notable at a state, national or international level.

2. **CRITERIA:** Notables reflect military or civilian distinction, lasting achievement, or historical standing that raises that individual to a position of national interest/significance and long-term impact. To be designated as an NCA notable burial, the decedent must be acclaimed, unique, of significant historical interest, and/or characterized as a person of distinction in military service or as a civilian on an international, national or state level. Examples of designated Notable Burials include, but are not limited to:

- Recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor;
- Individuals recognized at a national or international level for a particular military or civilian achievement, skill, knowledge, or talent (e.g., Olympic gold medalists, Navajo Code Talkers);
- Recipients of significant civilian national or international awards (e.g., Nobel Peace Prize, Pulitzer Prize);
- Individuals of national or international distinction (e.g., military leaders, U.S. presidents and vice presidents, members of Congress, Supreme Court justices, writers, poets, educators, explorers, scientists, inventors, doctors or well-known media personalities);
- Individuals associated with national or international “firsts” or “lasts” (e.g., last Civil War Veteran, first Black Navy officer);
- Elected State officials: Governor, Lieutenant Governor, State Senators or Representatives (or equivalent);

- Individuals with significant achievements associated with military conflicts, national or international disasters, tragedies or significant news events of lasting impact (e.g., casualties of explosions or fires, leaders of rescue efforts);
- Noteworthy individuals who, *in their time*, made exceptional contributions to events affecting larger patterns of American history; or who were prominent, distinguished, famous or infamous at the international, national or state level (e.g., women, African Americans, Native Americans, Hispanics, Japanese Americans);
- Individuals of special historical interest (e.g., foreign nationals who died as U.S. prisoners of war, spies or circumstances that led to interment or memorialization in an NCA cemetery);
- Individuals who served as superintendents/directors of NCA national cemeteries.

3. **PROCESS:** All new Notable Burial requests must be submitted from an NCA office to the NCA History Program. Requests must include completed *Checklist accessible* (by VA employees only) on the [NCA History Program](#) Intranet page. Listed below are examples of required information for Notable Burial requests:

- Identification of NCA staff making the request and contact information;
- All relevant identifying information for the individual being recommended (military rank, service branch, government affiliation, nationality, etc.);
- Summary including why the individual is acclaimed, unique, or of significant historical interest, and/or characterized as a person of distinction in military service or as a civilian on an international, national, or state level;
- Sources of documentation include primary or secondary documents from archival repositories; newspaper or magazine articles; website articles/entries; book excerpts. Complete citation information for each source, if not apparent on digital attachments, must include full title of the book or magazine (and article), author name, website, etc.; date of publication/presentation/Internet access; page numbers; website URL and file name or television/radio station location and broadcast affiliation (if applicable).

Cover Checklist: New Notable Burial Status

COVER CHECKLIST: NCA Notable Burial Status

Request Date:

Requestor Name/Contact Info:

Reason:

Documentation Provided : Yes No

Notable Burial Nominee

Full Name:

Rank/Title/Service:

Nationality:

Cemetery:

Meets Criteria Does Not Meet Criteria

Criteria:

- Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient
- National or International Military or Civilian Achievement (Code Talkers, Olympians)
- Recipient of Significant Awards (e.g. Nobel Peace Prize, Pulitzer Prize)
- National or International Distinction (e.g. military leaders, US Presidents, VPs, members of Congress, US Supreme Court Justices, writers, poets, educators, explores, scientists, inventors, doctors, actors, etc.)
- National or International "first" or "lasts" (e.g. last Civil War veteran)
- Elected State Officials (e.g. governor, lieutenant governor, legislators)
- Significant Achievements of Lasting Impact (e.g. casualties of explosions, rescuers, etc)
- Contemporarily Noteworthy (e.g. spies, females, ethnic populations)
- Special Historical Interest (e.g. foreign nationals, POWs)

Specifics/Notice Section:

Supporting Evidence/Documentation

- Ancestry.com
- Obituaries
- Official biographies (.gov/.mil/.edu)
- Fold3.com
- Newspapers
- Book references

History Program use only (Name /Date)

Drafted by:

Reviewed by:

Approved by:

Posted date:

NOTABLE BURIAL: Research Documentation

Cemetery:

Service Branch: Rank:

Title:

Name: First: M: Last:

Conflict: MOH:

Death Date: Month: Day: Year:

Burial Date: Month: Day: Year:

Grave Location: Section: Number:

Number of Burials: Special Population:

Distinction Category:

Summary Justification

Web Entry (*NTE 150 words*)

Note

Sources

APPENDIX B – NCA History Collection

1. **GENERAL INFORMATION:** The NCA History Program is responsible for the NCA History Collection, which is comprised of a physical library and archives, digitized records and images, and physical artifacts; some of which is managed using a software program (i.e., Proficio by Re:Discovery). Historians proactively identify documents, acquire, preserve, maintain, curate, protect and utilize records and artifacts associated with NCA, VA cemetery properties and features therein, and cultural materials and resources related to Veteran burial benefits.

All proposed donations to the NCA History Collection must be reviewed and recommended for acceptance by historians prior to official acceptance.

2. **DEEDS OF GIFT:** NCA Handbook 3160.01 outlines the process for accepting donations of gifts or items of personal property. Items deemed appropriate for the NCA History Collection will be accompanied by a Deed of Gift (See Appendix G of NCA Handbook 3160.01 for a sample Deed of Gift). A deed of gift assures that NCA acquires clear ownership of the material, that NCA can legally use the information/object for outreach and educational purposes and that NCA can dispose of it if it does not meet the criteria described in the NCA History Collection Statement. (Acceptance of oral histories from individuals uses a different document, see Appendix C. The transfer of objects from offices within VA/NCA is documented using other forms).

3. **NCA COLLECTION STATEMENT:** The NCA History Collection contains archives and artifacts that document VA's cemeteries and associated decedents from dates of interment when they were overseen by the U.S. Army, from prior to the Civil War through 1973, and thereafter by the Department of Veterans Affairs. Records may be original (unofficial) or reproduction (documents, photographs, drawings, and electronic media). Themes encompass cemetery landscapes and burial history; U.S. conflicts and related Army cemetery or mortuary practices; cemetery design, development, memorialization, and mourning practices from the nineteenth century to present; Decoration/Memorial Day; Abraham Lincoln and his Gettysburg Address and Second Inaugural speech; foreign-enemy POWs interred in federal cemeteries from the Civil War through World War II; Veteran service organizations and their political influence; Veteran demographics and federal policy; military service and awards; military memorialization through monuments and ceremony; historic preservation of VA cemeteries listed on or eligible for listing on the NRHP and documentation of associated cultural-resource management.

4. **ITEMS DEEMED NOT ACCEPTABLE:** Some materials and objects are not appropriate for the collection because they are not affiliated specifically with an NCA property (interment alone is insufficient), or the history of the administration or its predecessors. Examples include military service medals and awards; uniforms and related attire; bullets, shell casings and firearms; scale-model or toy military figures, vehicles or cannon; flags; and decorative posters and personal artwork. Unless there is a compelling justification, items such as original family photographs, diaries, and personal mementos will not be accepted.

Donation – Deed of Gift (Artifacts & Archives)



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON DC 20420

DONATION - DEED OF GIFT FORM

I wish to convey my ownership of certain historical materials, described below, to the National Cemetery Administration (NCA), Department of Veterans Affairs, for the purposes of preservation, research, and education. By signing below, with all due consideration, I hereby grant and convey to the NCA unrestricted title and all physical, custodial, literary, and copy rights that I may have to the historical materials herein described. NCA, its successors or assignees, may scan, duplicate, reformat, preserve, publish, and distribute images of these materials, in any format they deem appropriate.

Brief description of materials being donated:

| Quantity | Description | Subject(s) | Date/Range |
|----------|-------------|------------|------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Donor Signature

NCA Recipient Signature

Donor Name *(please print)*

NCA Recipient

Street Address

Please return this to:

City State Zip

*Department of Veterans Affairs
National Cemetery Administration
Office of Engagement & Memorial Innovations
History Program (44D)
810 Vermont Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20420*

Date

APPENDIX C – Oral History Interview Agreement and Deed of Gift

The acceptance of oral history interviews from any subject, employed by VA or not, to the NCA History Collection requires a signed *Oral History Interview Agreement and Deed of Gift*. This accountability assures that NCA acquires clear ownership and that NCA can legally use the information in research products. (Donations of artifacts or documents use the same Deed of Gift form found in Appendix G of NCA Handbook 3160.01).



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON DC 20420

Oral History Interview Agreement and Deed of Gift Form

The NCA Oral History Initiative is a project of the History Program for the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) at the Department of Veterans Affairs. The purpose of the Oral History Initiative is to record and preserve the personal memories of past and present NCA/NCS employees and administrators in order to supplement the documentary record of NCA and its antecedent organizations. The Oral History Initiative was established in 2002 for the benefit of America’s veterans, VA employees, the general public, and future generations. Tape recordings and transcripts that result from interviews conducted for the Oral History Initiative become part of the NCA History Program Archives and will be made available for use in keeping with the History Program’s mission and will be regulated according to any restrictions placed on their use by the interviewee and/or interviewer. Participation in this program is strictly voluntary.

Interviewee: The Interviewee affirms that he/she consents willingly to this interview. The Interviewee hereby grants and conveys to NCA all rights, title, and interests to the physical interview property (tapes, transcripts, etc.), whether edited or unedited; grants and conveys to NCA all literary and/or copy rights to the interview contents recorded on the physical property; grants and conveys to NCA the right to reformat and publish the interview tapes and transcripts, in whole or in part, in any format and on any media that NCA deems useful and/or necessary.

Interviewer: The Interviewer affirms that he/she consents willingly to this interview. The Interviewer hereby grants and conveys, unrestricted, to NCA all rights, title, and interests to the physical interview property (tapes, transcripts, etc.), whether edited or unedited; grants and conveys to NCA all literary and/or copy rights to the interview contents recorded on the physical property; grants and conveys to NCA the right to reformat and publish the interview tapes and transcripts, in whole or in part, in any format and on any media that NCA deems useful and/or necessary.

We, the undersigned, have read the above disclosures and affirm that the nature and purpose of this oral history interview is for historical research purposes. By signing and dating below, we hereby give consent to this interview and agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement.

Interviewee Signature

Interviewer Signature

(Print) Name of Interviewee

(Print) Name of Interviewer

Street Address

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
National Cemetery Administration
Office of Engagement & Memorial Innovations
History Program (44D)
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20420

City State Zip

Date

Date

APPENDIX D – List of NCA Building Types, Structures, and Objects

**NCA Cemetery Definitions:
A Comprehensive List of Building Types, Structures, and Objects**

ARCHEOLOGICAL

Above ground (*building fragment*)
Subsurface (*grave goods, lithic*)

BUILDINGS (B)

Administration Office
Administration/Chapel combination
Chapel
Columbaria (*Los Angeles*)
Garage
Gatehouse (*Dayton*)
Hemicycle (*Houston*)
Lodge
 Meigs-era/Second Empire
 Other
Maintenance facility
Public information center (PIC)
Pump house
Residence/dwelling
Restroom
Utility

STRUCTURE (S)

Archway (*monumental entrance*)
Bridge (*vehicular, pedestrian*)
Carillon tower
Columbaria
Committal shelter
Court of Honor (*Puerto Rico*)
Crypt/Receiving Vault (*Togus*)
Drainage ditch/Canals
Fountain
Fuel tanks (*gasoline, butane*)
Gates
 Entrance
 Postern/Service
Memorial walkway
Ossuary (*ash-scatter area*)
Reservoir/cistern (*underground/above*)
Road
Rostrum
Storage (*well, pump*)
Tunnel (*funeral @Dayton*)
Wall/fence
 Enclosure
 Grave bed
 Interior
 Memorial (*niche covers*)
 Retaining

Well

OBJECTS (O)

Headstone/Marker * *With human remains*
 Government (*group, comingled, single*)
 Private (*group, co-mingled, single*)

Monument (memorializes) * *No remains*
 Battlefield Cross (*2019*)
 Cenotaph (*Congressional Cemetery*)
 Government headstone (*in memory of*)
 Non-Standard Commemorative
 Standard Memorial
 Trees (*Bicentennial, President Garfield*)

Plaque *Generally historic, 19th-early 20thc*
 National Cemetery Act (*c. 1880, 1939*)
 General Orders No. 80 (*c. 1880, 1939*)
 Memorial Day Order (*c. 1880*)
 Bivouac of the Dead (*c. 1880, 2003+*)
 Gettysburg Address (*1909, 1939, 2009+*)
 Cemetery ID Plaque (*a.k.a cannon, c. 1867*)

Signage *Generally contemporary, 1973+*
 'Carry the Load' (*2019*)
 Entrance sign
 Flat marker section (*Jefferson Barr, 2017*)
 Gatepost Name/VA Seal (*pair, c. 1973*)
 Interpretative/wayside (*panel/metal base*)
 Nat'l Register of Historic Places/Nat'l Historic
 Landmark designation plaques
 Second Inaugural Address, Lincoln's (*2020*)
 Section Markers/IMO section
 Service insignia seals
 Soldiers' Lot plaque (*c. 1973*)
 Trees (*memorial, bicentennial*)

Site Features

Arbor/trellis (*Marietta*)
Benches (*fixed, permanent*)
Boundary posts (*soldier lot, trenches*)
Cannon/artillery
Fencing, interior (*internal, private lots*)
Flagpole circle/plaza
Overlooks/Observation areas
Paths/walkways
Pool/pond/stream
Trench burials

Flagpole

Avenue of Flags
POW/MIA
United States

APPENDIX E – Standard Plaques, Signage, and Tablets

VA national cemeteries historically contained cast-iron and bronze plaques or tablets containing significant text including the words of President Abraham Lincoln, historically beloved poetry, and relevant military issuances. Some of these original nineteenth-century objects have been removed or lost over the years. In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, replicas and contemporary versions of these objects that serve an historical purpose have been placed in national cemeteries.

- Replacement standard plaques, signage, and tablets are *not* historic.
- Standard plaques, signage, and tablets are *not* memorial objects or monuments.
- All historic and non-historic plaques, signage, and tablets are accounted for as *objects* in the Capital Asset Inventory (CAI), whether historic or not).
- Removal, relocation, and replacement of historic standard plaques, signage, and tablets are undertakings that must be coordinated with the NCA History Program and NCA Historic Preservation Officer for Section 106 consultation.

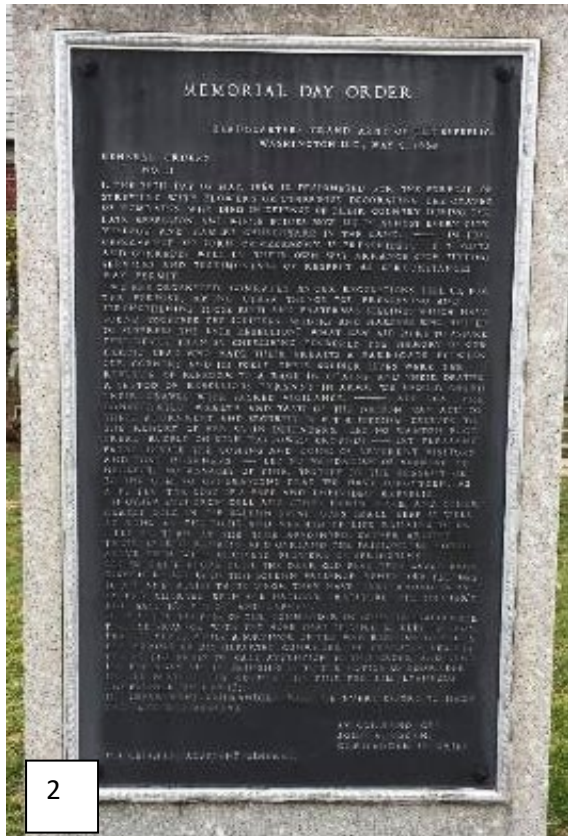
Placement of new standard plaques, signage, and tablets is based on the Army's installation practice in national cemeteries during its tenure through 1973. Original objects are contributing to, and replicas are appropriate for placement in, what over time have been designated historic cultural landscapes listed on the NRHP.

1. Historically the following *objects have been placed only in so-named VA "national cemeteries," never in other categories of NCA properties, to include Confederate cemeteries, government lots, post cemeteries, soldiers' lots, and monument sites. The Gettysburg Address and Bivouac of the Dead verse tablets are mandatory objects exclusively to be placed only in all so-named VA "national cemeteries." (Memo, New *Bivouac of the Dead* Tablets; miscellaneous correspondence related to the Gettysburg Address tablet). Reintroduction of additional historic signage may be considered on a case-by-case situation. President Lincoln's Gettysburg Address (1909 see E-2, 1939-1945, 2009)
2. Memorial Day Order (1880s, 1939-1945 see E-2)
3. Bivouac of the Dead verse (1880-1881, 2002 see E-2)
4. Bivouac of the Dead verse (2002 are not historic, see E-2)
5. An Act to Establish and Protect National Cemeteries (1880s, see E-2, 1939-1945)
6. General Orders No. 80 (1880s, 1939-1945 see E-2)
7. Tribute to the fallen and their families (2019 See E-3)

* This is a partial list of standard plaques, signage and tablets relevant to replacements.



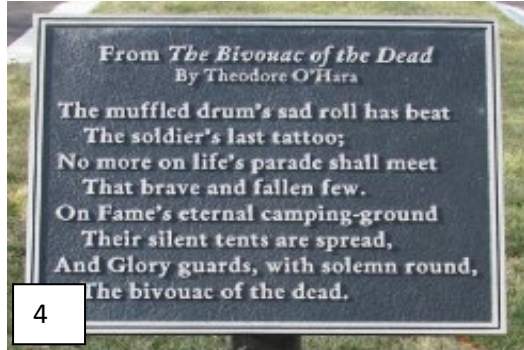
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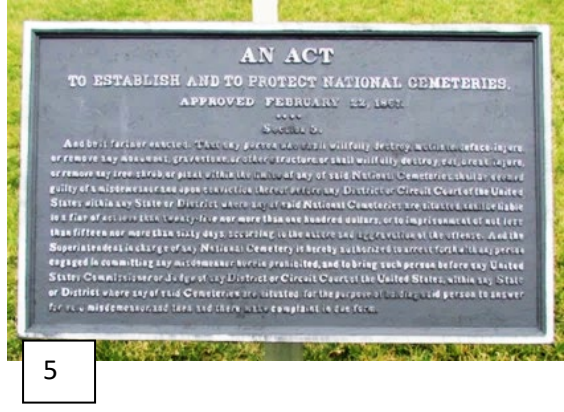
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