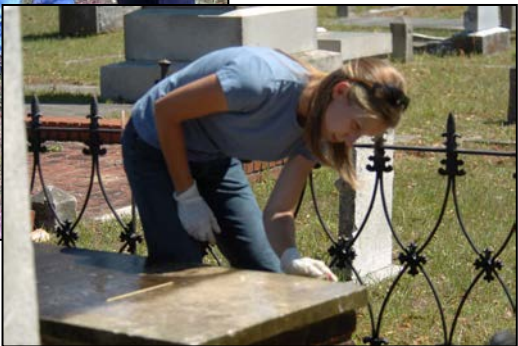


*PACT CEMETERY STEWARDSHIP MANUAL:  
ORGANIZING, BEST PRACTICES, AND RESOURCES*



*PENSACOLA AREA CEMETERY TEAM  
SEPTEMBER 2015*





*PACT CEMETERY STEWARDSHIP MANUAL:  
ORGANIZING, BEST PRACTICES, AND RESOURCES*

*by*

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## FOREWORD

The field of Cemetery Studies has developed rather recently. Although for more than two centuries dedicated individuals in the United States copied inscriptions on gravemarkers to preserve names and vital statistics of the deceased – often to support genealogical research – it was not until the 1970s that cemeteries and churchyards were clearly seen as worthy of study as historical resources. With this new regard for burial sites came the corresponding view that it was necessary to develop professional standards for preserving and maintaining the sites, and to assure that efforts to restore funerary objects do not inadvertently damage the very objects we are trying to save.

Through the study of graveyards and cemeteries, a great deal of information can be added to the historical record. Gravemarkers and associated materials at a site provide a unique view of a community's social history, giving details about the socio-economic conditions, the ethnic-cultural makeup, and the religious beliefs of the people buried there. Inscriptions and iconography on markers not only contribute information for genealogical study, but might also provide clues about the local and regional settlement patterns, trade and transportation routes, and epidemics or other disasters that occurred.

Florida has been at the forefront of cemetery preservation in the southeast. In 1988 the Florida Department of State's Bureau of Historic Preservation awarded its first grant for the study of a cemetery to Pensacola's St. Michael Cemetery. A year later, the Historic Tallahassee Preservation Board, with support from the Bureau of Historic Preservation, published *Florida's Historic Cemeteries: A Preservation Handbook*. The handbook discussed burial sites within Florida's historical context and traditional cultures, provided guidance for survey and documentation methods of the sites, and presented the accepted standards for cemetery restoration with particular emphasis on the correct methods for gravestone conservation. That same year the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation held a two-day workshop that drew participants not only from throughout Florida but also from Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana and Texas.

Cemetery preservation efforts over the past 40 years have been very successful. Untold volumes of information have been compiled directly from studies of Florida cemeteries. By the end of 2013, many have been evaluated and registered with the Bureau of Archaeology's Florida Master Site File, a clearing house for information regarding the status of the state's archaeological sites and historical structures. Some of the cemeteries, determined to have special historic, cultural, or artistic significance, have been listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Grants for survey and preservation planning as well as funding for major restoration projects, have been provided for burial sites as diverse as the colonial cemeteries in St. Augustine and Pensacola, early municipal cemeteries in Tallahassee and Key West, and those that reflect the state's diverse cultural makeup, such as a Bahamian cemetery in Coconut Grove, a Cuban cemetery in Tampa, and African-American cemeteries throughout the Red Hills area of north Florida.

While it is significant that cemeteries have had so much attention, it is equally important to realize that things have also changed greatly for cemetery studies during the past 40 years. The rise of technology has completely altered the way survey and documentation and information storage and retrieval methods are now managed. Digital cameras have removed the necessity for black & white, archival-processed photographs. GPS units have replaced the necessity of taking a measuring tape and graph paper into a cemetery to map its features. Duplicate copies of a survey or report no longer need to be placed in the files of various institutions to prevent the loss of information in event of fire, storm or theft because computers and the internet now allow innumerable copies to circulate.

Of equal importance is the fact that some conservation and burial site management practices have changed. Specific conservation methods, while initially deemed harmless, when studied over a 40 year period have shown they might contribute to certain types of deterioration. Four decades of preservation-minded administrative policies have allowed cemetery stewards to determine what works and what doesn't, either for the conditions at a single site, or for a collective set of burial grounds.



This *Manual* focuses on Pensacola's cemeteries with updated information that can be utilized by the Stewards to continue sound conservation and management programs. It will assist with the decisions that can assure that these invaluable resources which contribute so greatly to Pensacola's heritage will continue into the future with integrity.

Sharyn Thompson  
Director, Center for Historic  
Cemeteries Preservation

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Pensacola Area Cemetery Team (PACT) Manual is a resource designed to assist local municipal governmental agencies (associated with the City of Pensacola and Escambia County, Florida) and cemetery stewards overseeing historic cemeteries better understand the issues associated with historic cemeteries in the Pensacola area. The manual draws on a number of previously published works that deal with cemetery preservation and is not meant to be a stand-alone resource. For example, the Department of State, Division of Historical Resources provides an excellent and comprehensive guide to cemetery resource materials and best practices for the state of Florida. Likewise, several state publications such as the Michigan Historic Cemeteries Guide and the Illinois Historic Cemetery Preservation Handbook are particularly helpful. The Chicora Foundation also provides well thought out materials on line. The example of a landscape maintenance contract designed for Pensacola relies heavily on material from Chicora in its structure, for example.

In recent years, advances in cemetery studies have led to a better understanding of best practices in areas from stone and metal conservation to landscape maintenance. However, most current research and best practice examples rest on the work initially published in 1980s by preservationists Sharyn Thompson (*Florida's Historic Cemeteries: A Preservation Handbook*) and Lynette Strangstad (*A Graveyard Preservation Primer*). These classics are still the go-to references for preservationists today. This manual relies on the guidance offered by these two leaders in the field of cemetery preservation.

Often, cemetery stewards are unaware of the role municipal governmental agencies play in cemetery management and oversight. Sections dealing with Code Enforcement, the Property Appraisers Office, and Local and State Law are meant to help stewards better understand how agencies and laws interface with cemeteries and their stewards. Several other individuals in associated fields also helped guide stewards in understanding of where the not-for-profit cemetery fits into the larger picture. Rita Poff, retired from the Florida Division of Funeral, Cemetery and Consumer Services, is one

example. Keep Pensacola Beautiful is due many thanks for their always helpful approach to maintenance in partnership with the City of Pensacola.

Stewards and municipal agencies also often are not aware of the Florida Master Site File and the importance of recording cemetery sites with the Site File. Recording the cemetery with the Florida Master Site File is the number one step in preserving historic cemetery resources. For this project, members of the University of West Florida Graduate Anthropology Association recorded cemeteries that were not already registered with the State. All fourteen cemeteries in the City are recorded and on file with the State because of the dedication of these students.

Over the course of a year, faculty and staff from UWF volunteered their time and expertise to conduct class room sessions and hands-on training for cemetery stewards. These classes and workshops covered everything from how to make a simple map, to what to do when skeletal material is exposed, to how to go about researching grant and other funding avenues. The UWF Sponsored Research team was especially helpful in identifying sources and offering advice on how to construct a grant request. The UWF Historic Trust is always gracious and generous in their support.

PACT members saw the generous giving of their time and talents matched and supported by the Florida Public Archaeology Network (FPAN). Stewards attending sessions were encouraging to each other and embraced the information; they will provide guidance to others in their organizations and oversee their cemetery resources as well-informed stewards. Stewardship is often an off-putting term to people who do not have any idea about how to form an effective stewardship group. One of the most helpful sections of the manual actually deals with how to do this. Drawing on a number of resources, PACT members put together a practical and step-by-step approach to forming a stewardship group. This will be especially helpful to groups that are just beginning to form.

The PACT manual is a relatively simple document; however, it is designed to offer common sense approaches while directing the general reader to other more detailed resources. The team very much appreciates the thoughtful assessment of

manual materials by our two evaluators: Sarah Miller (Florida Public Archaeology Network, NE Region) and Sharyn Thompson (The Center for Historic Cemeteries Preservation). UWF archaeologist Dr. Ramie Gougeon edited, compiled, and formatted this document with assistance from Jennifer Melcher (Archaeology Institute) who drafted the map of cemeteries in Pensacola.

The City of Pensacola initially requested assistance from the UWF Division of Anthropology and Archaeology. The City's interest in and support of PACT has been invaluable. Moreover, the Escambia County Commission's support has also been exceptional. The City of Pensacola and Escambia County are taking positive steps to insure that the historic cemetery resources in our area become community assets.

A number of UWF departments, institutes, and offices, along with faculty, staff, and students, have provided in-kind support for years in service to our community. The Archaeology Institute leads these efforts. Over the past thirteen years, the Institute has provided leadership in the effort to preserve our historic cemeteries, assist cemetery stewards, and bring the stories of these amazing historic sites to the public's attention. These efforts and the work of PACT would not have been possible without the steadfast support of Dr. Elizabeth Benchley, Director of the Archaeology Institute.

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## **PENSACOLA AREA CEMETERY TEAM (PACT) MEMBERS**

Dr. Elizabeth Benchley: UWF, Archaeology Institute, Director

Ms. C. Renea Brown: Escambia County, Property Appraisers Office

Mr. Gwinn Corley: Keep Pensacola Beautiful, Executive Director

Dr. A. Joanne Curtin: UWF, Associate Professor of Anthropology

Ms. Catherine Eddins: UWF, Archaeology Institute Cemetery Outreach Coordinator

Ms. Helen Gibson: City of Pensacola, Neighborhood Revitalization Coordinator

Mr. Charlie Gonzalez: GISP, Escambia County GIS Manager, GIS Consulting

Dr. Ramie Gougeon: UWF, Assistant Professor of Anthropology

Ms. Nicole Grinnan: FPAN, Public Archaeology Coordinator

Mr. Gregg Harding: FPAN, Graduate Assistant; UWF Graduate Anthropology Association

Dr. Kristina Killgrove: UWF, Assistant Professor of Anthropology

Dr. Amy Mitchell-Cook: UWF, Chair and Associate Professor of History

Mr. Rob Overton, Jr.: UWF Historic Trust, Executive Director

Mr. Ross Pristera: UWF Historic Trust, Historic Preservationist

Dr. Della Scott-Ireton: FPAN, Associate Director

Ms. Margo Stringfield: UWF, Archaeology Institute Archaeologist; PACT Facilitator

Ms. Sharyn Thompson: Director, Center for Historic Cemeteries Preservation

Ms. Lauren Walls: Archaeologist, New South Associates

Ms. Rhoda Gonzalez Warren: St. Michael's Cemetery Foundation, Board of Directors

Mr. Steve Wineki: City of Pensacola, Code Enforcement

Mr. Frank Winn: Attorney at Law

UWF = University of West Florida

FPAN = Florida Public Archaeology Network

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Across the country, municipalities are struggling with how best to address issues associated with the historic cemetery resources dotting the contemporary landscapes of their communities. In Pensacola, our historic cemeteries are open-air museums that reflect a rich cultural heritage. Whether well maintained, neglected, or abandoned, they will be a constant presence on the landscape into the foreseeable future.

In Pensacola and elsewhere, how cemetery resources are addressed will generally result in one of two outcomes: either no or inadequate action is taken, or issues are effectively addressed. In the first instance, the cemeteries will continue to be eyesores that pose a threat to public safety. In the second instance, cemetery resources can become inviting community assets that contribute to a “sense of place” for residents and visitors alike. By addressing the complex issues associated with the cemetery resources in our community, we will be moving toward the second outcome.

The Pensacola Area Cemetery Team (PACT) was organized in late 2013 following Pensacola Mayor Ashton Hayward’s request to the University of West Florida (UWF) Division of Anthropology and Archaeology for assistance in identifying and addressing issues associated with historic cemetery resources located within the city limits of Pensacola. UWF has a long-standing commitment to community service and is pleased to assist the City of Pensacola in promoting historic cemetery preservation. The UWF Archaeology Institute has been actively involved with local, state, and regional historic cemetery preservation issues for over thirteen years. The UWF Florida Public Archaeology Network (FPAN) has also taken an active role statewide in promoting historic cemetery preservation. Like many municipal governments, the City of Pensacola does not own the cemeteries within city boundaries. However, the City does wish to be supportive of citizens overseeing historic cemetery resources. The mission of the Pensacola Area Cemetery Team is *to promote local historic cemetery preservation through an interdisciplinary approach to education and training and by fostering an informed stewardship base.*

The Pensacola Area Cemetery Team (PACT) is composed of professionals in the fields of archaeology, biological anthropology, history, historic preservation, municipal government (several branches), landscape maintenance, and law. Several professionals and community volunteers involved with PACT were instrumental in establishing a successful stewardship plan for historic St. Michael's Cemetery.

Following a series of organizational meetings and with input from local cemetery stewards, PACT members began to identify specific needs to be addressed as well as to explore topics of specific interest to local stewards. Over the course of 2014, PACT worked with local stewardship groups on strategies that will enable citizen stewardship groups to better oversee the historic cemetery resources in their care. PACT offered public talks, workshops, and one-on-one sessions with local stewardship groups. One end product of this year-long process is a stewardship base better equipped to manage the resources under their care. Moreover, this comprehensive manual detailing issues, best practices and guidelines, resource referrals, and recommendations for promoting the preservation of Pensacola's historic cemetery resources is a resource for municipal government and private stewardship groups. Hopefully, it will also be useful to cemetery stewards throughout Florida.

Margo S. Stringfield, RPA  
PACT Project Facilitator

## II. CEMETERIES IN THE CITY OF PENSACOLA

Name	Date Established	Organizational Roots
1. St. Michael's	mid to late 18 <sup>th</sup> century	Catholic/Community
2. Roberts (Gull Point)	ca1862	Family
3. Beth El	1869	Jewish/Temple
4. Montgomery-John the Baptist	1870	Church/Burial Assoc.
5. St. John's	1876	Masonic/Cemetery Co.
6. Magnolia	1882	Church/Burial Assoc.
7. New Hope	1882	Family
8. AME Zion	1886	Church/Burial Assoc.
9. St. Joseph's	1899	Church/Catholic
10. Clopton	1901	Family
11. Mt. Zion	ca 1905	Church/Burial Assoc.
12. B'nai Israel	1922	Jewish/Synagogue
13. Holy Cross	1940s (property bought ca 1914)	Catholic/Community
14. Bayview Memorial Park	ca 1960s	Business/Community

### **PENSACOLA CITY COUNCIL DISTRICTS**

1. St. Michael's Cemetery (7.89 acres) located at 6 N. Alcaniz St.  
City District 6
2. Roberts/Gull Point (4.53 acres) located at 3300 Creighton Blvd.  
City District 1
3. Beth El (1.57 acres) located at 2300 West Cervantes  
City District 7

4. St. Johns (26.1 acres) located at 301 N “G” St.  
City District 7
5. Magnolia (1.87 acres) located at “A” and Brainerd (on “A” north of Brainerd)  
City District 6
6. New Hope (1 acre) located on Wimbledon Drive  
City District 3
7. AME Zion (2.27 acres) located “A” and Brainerd Streets (on “A” south of Brainerd)  
City District 6
8. John the Baptist/Montgomery (1.1 acres) located at 500 E. Cross St.  
City District 5
9. St. Joseph (2.08 acres) located at 500 N. Pace Blvd.  
City District 7
10. Clopton (.06 acres) located at 440 Selina St.  
City District 6
11. Mt. Zion (1.43 acres) located at 2600 N. Guillemard St.  
City District 6
12. B’Nai Israel (.09 acres) located at 2300 W. Strong St.  
City District 7
13. Holy Cross (30.07 acres) located 1300 Maura St.  
City District 5
14. Bayview Memorial (10 acres) located at 3351 Scenic Highway  
City District 3

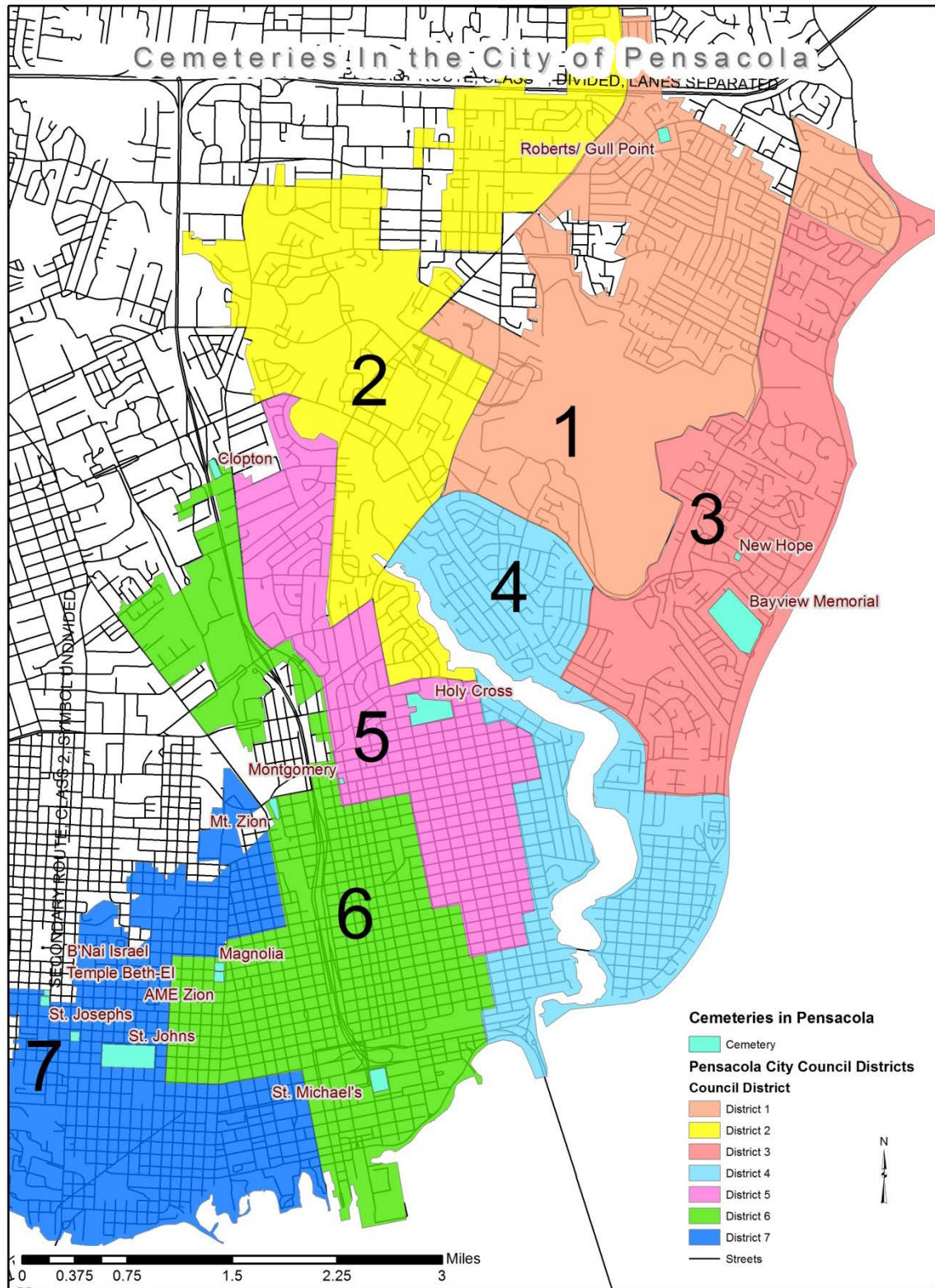


Figure 1. Cemeteries and city council districts of Pensacola, Florida.

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### III. CEMETERIES AND THE LAW

Cemeteries, burial grounds and human remains; the governance and protection thereof are the subject of a large body of law. The law consists of both statutory law and common law established by history and judicial case decisions. The law establishes the recognition of the sanctity of human remains and of the perpetuity of burial grounds. Burial grounds may be considered abandoned when and if there is no recognizable trace of existence; however, that abandonment would cease upon later discovery of trace or evidence.

The following comments are intended for general reference by municipal government and private stewardship groups.

#### **Statutory Regulation**

The primary statutory law for regulation of cemeteries is found in Florida Statute Chapter 497. For purposes of this manual, it is noted that cemeteries for which this manual is written, that is those operated or cared for by municipal government or private stewardship groups, are exempted from most government regulation. The exemptions include:

- Religious institution cemeteries of less than 5 acres, which provide only single-level ground burial
- County and municipal cemeteries.
- Community and nonprofit associate cemeteries, which provide only single-level ground burial and do not sell burial spaces or burial merchandise.
- Cemeteries owned and operated or dedicated by a religious institution prior to June 23, 1976.
- Cemeteries beneficially owned and operated since July 1, 1915, by a fraternal organization or its corporate agent.

- A columbarium consisting of less than one-half acre which is owned by and immediately contiguous to an existing religious institution facility and is subject to local government zoning.
- Family cemeteries of less than 2 acres which do not sell burial spaces or burial merchandise.
- A mausoleum consisting of 2 acres or less which is owned by and immediately contiguous to an existing religious institution facility and is subject to local government zoning.

Exempt cemeteries, or their stewards, should be aware of certain applicable statutes. §497.260(3) provides all cemeteries exempt under this chapter which are in excess of 5 acres must submit to investigation and mediation in the event of consumer complaint. §497.260 provides that no legal entity conducting or maintaining any public or private cemetery may deny burial space to any person because of race, creed, marital status, sex, natural origin, or color. A cemetery may designate parts of cemeteries or burial grounds for persons whose religious code requires isolation. Cemeteries owned by religious institutions may limit burials to members of the religious institution and their families.

### **Statutory Protection**

Florida statutes take seriously the protection of cemeteries and burial grounds, and stewards should use this protection to report and deter vandalism. Fla. Stat. §872.02 defines any willful damage or disturbance of a grave or tomb and its environs or amenities as a felony. In the cases of willful disturbance of or damage to unmarked human burials, it is a misdemeanor for a person with knowledge that a human burial is being disturbed, vandalized, or damaged, not to report same to a law enforcement agency, as set forth in Fla. Stat. §872.05.



## **Abandoned Cemeteries**

Fla. Stat. §497.284 provides:

- Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, a county or municipality which has within its jurisdiction an abandoned cemetery or a cemetery that has not been reasonably maintained for a period in excess of 6 months may, upon notice to the department, take such action as is necessary and appropriate to provide for maintenance and security of the cemetery. The solicitation of private funds and the expenditure of public funds for the purposes enumerated in this subsection are hereby authorized, provided that no action taken by a county or municipality under this subsection shall establish an ongoing obligation or duty to provide continuous security or maintenance for any cemetery.
- No county or municipality nor any person under the supervision or direction of the county or municipality, providing good faith assistance in securing or maintaining a cemetery under subsection (1), may be subject to civil liabilities or penalties of any type for damages to property at the cemetery.
- A county or municipality that has maintained or secured a cemetery pursuant to the provisions of subsection (1) may maintain an action at law against the owner of the cemetery to recover an amount equal to the value of such maintenance or security.

## **Ownership, Access and Maintenance**

Regardless of muniments or other evidence of title, Florida has codified in Fla. Stat. §704.08 certain rights of access and maintenance as:

- The relatives and descendants of any person buried in a cemetery shall have an easement for ingress and egress for the purpose of visiting the cemetery at reasonable times and in a reasonable manner. The owner of the land may designate the easement. If the cemetery is abandoned or

otherwise not being maintained, such relatives and descendants may request the owner to provide for reasonable maintenance of the cemetery, and, if the owner refuses or fails to maintain the cemetery, the relatives and descendants shall have the right to maintain the cemetery.

Ownership of or access to burial grounds or cemeteries can take many forms.

- formerly dedicated or titled of public record, which may contain certain restrictions or reservations
- dedicated by existence, use, community knowledge, or private record, which are governed by custom of the community
- mere existence on private land, which will be subject to common law rights of access and maintenance

Transfer of ownership may occur in any manner that any other property right may be transferred, subject to any restriction or other right placed upon or retained by the transferor. The title of the lot-holder in a cemetery is rarely a title in fee simple. The right of burial conveyed by written instrument in a churchyard cemetery is either an easement or a license.

Regardless of ownership, the rights of access and maintenance are protected by Fla. Stat. §704.08. Any person acquiring title to land, takes subject to rights described above for access and maintenance. There appears no objectively defined standard of care and maintenance beyond “reasonable,” and a property owner is not obligated to maintain except maintenance as required so that conditions will not violate municipal or county codes that prohibit nuisance conditions.

Frank Winn  
Attorney at Law

**Suggested further reading:**

Abandoned Cemeteries

<http://www.flheritage.com/archaeology/cemeteries/index.cfm?page=Laws>

The Catholic Encyclopedia; Cemeteries in Law

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/03508a.htm>

Cemetery Ownership

<http://www.flheritage.com/archaeology/cemeteries/index.cfm?page=Ownership>

A Grave Situation: Protecting the Deceased and Their Final Resting Places from Destruction

<https://www.floridabar.org/divcom/jn/jnjournal01.nsf/Author/7A4A37FC7EAE2F1F85257AA6004E5000>

Division of Funeral, Cemetery & Consumer Services

[http://www.myfloridacfo.com/FuneralCemetery/fc\\_consumerfaq.htm](http://www.myfloridacfo.com/FuneralCemetery/fc_consumerfaq.htm)

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## **IV. ABANDONED AND BLIGHTED CEMETERIES: A CODE ENFORCEMENT PERSPECTIVE**

In most jurisdictions, there are generally several state and local ordinances that can be utilized by an agency in dealing with abandoned and blighted properties. These properties typically include but are not limited to laws that address overgrowth, outside storage of material, inoperable or abandoned vehicles, or other factors that cause nuisance conditions. A cited vacant property is usually brought into compliance either by corrective actions taken by the property owner or corrective action taken by the jurisdiction. If a jurisdiction takes the corrective action, the cost of this corrective action is levied against the property owner in the form of a fine and subsequent lien attachment if the fine is not paid. If corrective action cannot be taken, the property will remain in violation of code while a fine is levied and subsequent lien attached. The common denominator in any code-related case is that the actual owner of the property is ultimately responsible for the conditions of the property and any corrections of code violations found on their property. In the vast majority of code violation cases, a property owner is easily determined. Ownership can be in the form of a single individual, a group of individuals, a limited liability corporation (LLC), a non-profit organization or a lending institution to name just a few. If a fine is assessed by a code enforcement board, special magistrate judge or county court judge due to a property not being brought into compliance with code, a lien can be assessed against the property owners' property by a legal filing through the Clerk of the Court. If the lien is not satisfied, the property can be foreclosed on by the jurisdiction. Foreclosures by a jurisdiction are uncommon due to a number of factors which include but are not limited to legal cost and property disposition.

Abandoned and blighted cemeteries pose numerous problems to what are common and successful practices utilized by code enforcement agencies. The following is a breakdown of a sample of problems and typical solutions Code Enforcement faces:

- The majority of abandoned and blighted cemeteries are extremely old properties which have been in a state of disrepair for a number of years or even decades. The properties are usually extremely blighted with heavy overgrowth, damaged fences, buildings or grave sites. The determination of ownership can be more difficult in comparison with other properties, but a determination of ownership can still be accomplished with thorough research. Due to the age of these properties, it is very common that the owners of record are individuals who are deceased or organizations that have been dissolved or are no longer active. Citing the property owner of record can be accomplished but there is often little hope of any type of corrective action being taken by the owner.
- The code enforcement process can however proceed with the property being found in violation of code, a daily fine being assessed and subsequent lien being attached, all pursuant to Florida State Statute. This action however is simply “going through the motions” as the property will remain in a blighted condition due to absentee ownership. Daily fines levied upon absentee owners seldom bring about compliance with code, which is the goal.
- Foreclosure process allows a property to be placed on the market for sale. When sold, the costs (fines, improvement liens, etc.) owed to the jurisdiction will be partially or fully recovered. Additionally, the new owner of the property has a vested financial interest in correcting any code violations on the property. This, however, does not apply to abandoned and blighted cemeteries. Buyers who invest in foreclosed properties have absolutely no interest in the ownership of an abandoned and blighted cemetery as there is absolutely no return on investment. This makes foreclosure a useless venture for any jurisdiction to take as it will also add additional costs on top of what may have already been incurred with no chance of recovery.

- The ability for a jurisdiction to correct a blighted vacant property in an expedient manner is still somewhat uncommon within the State of Florida but is a capability the City of Pensacola already has in place. City of Pensacola Code Enforcement has a two-person Lot Crew which cuts and cleans over 600 non-compliant properties per year. The vast majority of these properties which are cited and brought into compliance by the Lot Crew are single parcel properties (the size of a typical residential lot). The work involved to bring these properties into compliance generally involves cutting the grass, trimming bushes, and some debris or litter removal. These abatements usually take one hour to accomplish per lot. There is little expertise needed as it is basic yard maintenance. Cemeteries are generally much larger in size, often covering entire city blocks. Specific knowledge is needed regarding cemetery upkeep to insure damage is not done to any of the individual gravesites or the many surrounding markers, some of which may have significant historical significance. A larger, full time crew with specific knowledge of cemetery maintenance is required to properly maintain a cemetery. The City of Pensacola, as is the case with most jurisdictions, simply does not have the expertise or the adequate staffing to bring an abandoned cemetery back to an acceptable standard much less maintain one on an ongoing basis. This makes our standard abatement practices not at all feasible for cemeteries.

In closing, one can easily see that abandoned and blighted cemeteries pose obstacles that common and successful code enforcement practices and procedures simply cannot address. It is not the jurisdiction's responsibility to maintain these private properties and even if they had an interest to, they simply do not have the resources to accomplish it. There is no easy or standard solution for a jurisdiction or code enforcement agency to take regarding abandoned and blighted cemeteries. Abandoned and blighted cemeteries will obviously not repair themselves, so an agency or jurisdiction must utilize methods that are well outside the norm if they hope to accomplish any type of code compliance.

The main obstacle we have found is one of *perception*. An abandoned and blighted cemetery is usually in such a poor condition that it seems that the cost and effort involved will be too monumental for anyone to undertake in order to bring the property back to a manageable state. Therefore a concerted effort must be made by the jurisdiction to address this “can’t be done” perception. A plan must be developed and partnerships formed with any outside agency willing to assist. Community leaders and volunteers play a crucial role and must be informed every step of the way as well. This first step is absolutely critical if a revitalization effort is to work. It can easily take months or a year to get an effort off the ground. Once a plan is developed and improvements begin to show, it opens the door for additional community involvement. This in turn leads the way for possible long term commitments from individuals and groups who once thought the effort was futile. Thinking outside the box and not from a traditional code enforcement perspective has been the key for the City of Pensacola in dealing with our abandoned and blighted cemeteries.

Steve Wineki  
Administrative Officer  
City of Pensacola Code Enforcement



## **V. THE ROLE OF THE PROPERTY APPRAISER'S OFFICE RELATIVE TO CEMETERIES IN ESCAMBIA COUNTY**

The history of Pensacola does not rest on a single parcel of land or solely in one area of town. The contributions of our forefathers are confirmed by acknowledging their existence in this world. Their journeys are documented in open air museums commonly known as cemeteries. The investment of life and death in a community provides a timeline with which success or failure can be measured by ancestral achievements completed within that short span of time we call "life."

A key role in preserving ownership records of our cemeteries is captured within the functions of the Property Appraiser's Office (see Appendix A for additional information on these functions and duties). Current and historical tax records encapsulate the mood and social views of a community through the chain of conveyance. Inquiries, better known as investigative research, based on "who" sold "what piece of property" to "whom" for "how much" and "why" may shed light on what would otherwise remain a mysterious past. Those little inferences invoke more than a mere thought and a sigh of "hmmm." They can foster a desire to understand our roles in the long term preservation of the history of our communities, irrespective of their locations within Escambia County.

The role of the Property Appraiser's Office concerning cemeteries is vital because it is the genesis of multiple processes pertaining to designating a parcel as a cemetery. The appraiser's office posts deed transactions and creates parcels based on the legal description contained in that deed. Afterwards a parcel identification number is generated. The parcel number becomes the identifier and is used on most, if not all, tax exemption, grant and historical recognition applications filed by the owner.

Others in the community, for a myriad of reasons, are dependent upon the accuracy and availability of our records to confirm or give direction to their research. Illustrations of some of those functions are outlined as follows:

- Accurate ownership and address records can ensure the timely delivery of legal notices to the owner/steward of a cemetery.
- Descendants may have the opportunity to contact the steward/organization to locate the burial site of their family members.
- General public, educational institutions and local historians are afforded the availability of online maps and aerials to locate a burial site which may not be visible from the road.
- Retaining compliance with Florida Statutes requires additional information disbursement to the public based on an active or inactive status of a burial site.

Florida provides a tax exemption to cemeteries if they qualify by statute. Once the exemption is granted, the Property Appraiser's office applies the exemption to the tax roll and annually sends a "Certification of Use" form in January. The owner or steward completes the form and has the responsibility of returning it to the office no later than the filing deadline of March 15th of each year. The purpose of this form is to monitor any changes in ownership or control of a cemetery and it is the mechanism by which the exemption is retained. The loss of the exempt status could result in an increase in property taxes which may certainly add an undue burden to an organization.

There are occasions where the owner of a cemetery is not easily identified. Your local Property Appraiser's Office has established an internal research team to assist in determining ownership based on a review of recorded instruments and public records. This department does not serve as a title company; however, their expertise provides an additional arm of support to the community by giving clarity to ownership records on the tax roll. Compliance with state and local laws is the goal of all governmental agencies. The evolution of statutes and regulations is necessary to address the ongoing needs and challenges of our community. The Property Appraiser's Office will continue to make strides towards providing ease of access to public records, through the means of technology, for current and future tax roll data.

The Property Appraiser's Office relishes every opportunity to serve the citizens of Escambia County. Collaborative efforts, such as PACT, give the professional and

volunteers of our county an opportunity to develop relationships that provide the rungs on the ladder of community cohesiveness. Your Property Appraiser and staff are glad to share in the success of our county. Should you require our assistance, please feel free to do so by phone, mail or email. Our office is your office.

C. Renea Brown, CFE  
Assistant Appraisal Supervisor  
Escambia County

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## VI. ORGANIZING A CEMETERY STEWARDSHIP GROUP

*Stewardship: the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care.* (Merriam-Webster 2015)

### **Step One: Understanding Stewardship**

Before you begin asking people to be part of a stewardship group, you will want to understand what a cemetery stewardship group does and be able to impart that knowledge to others. Some of the points to be made to concerned citizen stakeholders are that stewardship associations:

- Facilitate meeting the community's common goal of bettering our community
- Empower concerned citizen stakeholders to influence what happens in the cemetery through a thoughtful and informed approach
- Provide the concerned citizen stakeholders with an effective communication link for promoting community cultural heritage and historic preservation
- Help members work for the preservation and improvement of the cemetery and overall community environment
- Serve as a vehicle for obtaining outside funding to support cemetery needs
- Can plan improvement and maintenance activities for the cemetery that are based on a thoughtful and informed approach.

### **Step Two: Developing the Core group**

To get started, you will need a small group of committed stakeholders who share a similar point of view regarding the needs of the cemetery and a willingness to form a cemetery association to address cemetery issues. This small group with no more than five to ten (5-10) people will be the Core group. The final number of people in your core group will depend on whose input you feel will best help define the important issues

that all stewards will rally around. It is important for members of this core group to be able to work well together and share a common vision regarding important issues affecting the cemetery.

Some examples of interest groups to be considered for the selection of cemetery stewards to be represented in the core group are:

- People whose relatives or associates may be buried in the cemetery
- Homeowners selected to represent adjacent blocks or streets
- Members of local historical or genealogy societies
- Church leaders
- Business owners
- Apartment residents, managers, owners
- School teachers or administrators

**TIP:** If the core group gets too large, it will become unmanageable and result in low productivity. Keep the size of the core group at ten or less.

### **Step Three: Educating the Core group**

It is vital to establish a core group of well-informed stewards so that founding members will be able to inform and educate others who join the stewardship association. The group as a whole needs to be on the same track in terms of approaches to historic cemetery preservation and maintenance. The core group will want to familiarize themselves with the following materials:

<http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab/stand.htm> (Note: when you are reading the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation, remember that cemetery markers are structures – think of the markers in the cemetery as small historic houses).

<http://dos.myflorida.com/historical/archaeology/human-remains/abandoned-cemeteries/>

<http://dos.myflorida.com/media/31938/floridahistoriccemeteries.pdf>

(Florida's Historic Cemeteries, A Preservation Handbook)

After the core group has read the basic recommended material, members will be prepared to sit down and discuss issues in an informed manner. It is important that everyone be familiar with these suggested preservation materials, as an informed core group makes initial discussions flow easily. The size of the organization will naturally expand as committees and task groups are developed to achieve the goals of the cemetery stewardship group. Make sure all understand that any approach you take is one that will *do no harm*.

#### **Step Four: The Start-up Meeting**

Once the members of the core group have been identified, agreed to serve, and read the recommended materials, it is appropriate to set a meeting time and place. You may contact PACT and request a cemetery stewardship consultant to assist your group in getting started (UWF Archaeology Institute is a clearing house to connect with PACT, phone 850.474.3015).

The first meeting of the Core group is very important as it sets the tone for future meetings. It is important to be organized. Have a tentative agenda prepared. Try not to let the meeting drag on. An hour is usually a good time frame for most meetings. If possible, present all of the members of the Core group with a copy of the agenda a week before the meeting.

Because they all share a common vision and have read the recommended preservation materials, the discussion should be focused and able to accommodate all of the interests of the members of the core group. During this initial meeting the group will need to:

- **Choose a temporary chairperson**

A good organizer will always place achieving the goals of the organization above being elected to be the chairperson. So if the group decides to select someone other than the person who convened the group, this should not deter the

conveyer from being an active participant in the ongoing process. There will be many other opportunities to utilize one's leadership abilities. Some tips and notes on working in groups, including traits of a good leader and the importance of choosing capable people, are found at the end of this section.

- **Plan a Group Visit to the Cemetery**

An important step at the beginning of a cemetery plan is to be familiar with the cemetery landscape and aware of its boundaries. Sometimes the boundary is easily determined by roads or natural features along the border of the cemetery. Sometimes the boundary is less clear. A review of a city or county map and a tour around the area will help the Core group better understand the physical landscape of the cemetery. A group trip to the site will also help in building a communal understanding of the overall site and the funerary features.

- **Develop a complete list of cemetery area residents**

Once boundaries have been determined, a complete list of residents and property owners around the cemetery should be obtained. The list should be kept current throughout the process to allow every stakeholder to become involved. In order to get a complete list, you may need to contact PACT or check with the Escambia County Property Appraisers Office. Neighbors should have a vested interest in the successes of your group – property values can hinge on the esthetics of the surrounding area.

- **Discuss each person's ideas concerning the problems and needs of the cemetery**

Select an issue the group will rally around. This issue should be easily understood and stated in a manner that can be easily communicated and understood in press releases, in newsletters, on pamphlets and brochures, and passed along by word of mouth.

- **Discuss goals, projects and concerns**

It is very important that the initial goals of the group be small and easily achievable. Nothing breeds success like success. If you find that the group has



reached a stumbling block and does not seem to want to move forward, often the cause will be that the goals are too large and too difficult to achieve.

- **Develop a mission statement and “catch phrase”**

Begin to formulate a mission statement and also begin to put together a phrase that sums up why your cemetery is unique or important. Visit St. Michael’s Cemetery Foundation at [stmichaelscemetery.org](http://stmichaelscemetery.org) to read their mission statement. The catch phrase for St. Michael’s is: “St. Michael’s Cemetery is the oldest and most significant historic site that survives above ground in Pensacola.” What phrase best evokes the nature of your cemetery? When you have a defining phrase make sure you use it at every chance (media, public talks, etc.) as it will become a defining description helpful in cementing the importance of the site in the public’s consciousness.

- **Identify and recruit additional leaders**

Identify other potential leaders in the community. The importance of a pool of qualified leadership is often overlooked as a stewardship group is developing. Strong leadership gives an organization guidance, stability, continuity, motivation to take action, and unity of purpose. The task of recruiting and developing leaders has to be an ongoing activity throughout the lifetime of any stewardship association.

- **Determine how frequently members would like to meet, as well as a convenient time and location**

The core group will need to meet several times before it will be ready to hold a meeting with the entire body of concerned citizen stakeholders. The core group should meet together as many times as needed to formalize an organizational strategy before the first meeting of the entire stewardship group. Once the entire stewardship group is involved, the core group will want to continue meeting as an advisory board for the newly formed stewardship association.

- **Determine special skills, talents and willingness to participate**

Identify any special talents, expertise, skills, helpful resources and/or any special areas of interest any member might possess. Also determine each Core group member's willingness to participate and help.

**TIP:** Some group members might not be able to attend meetings, yet possess a special skill that can be of use to the group. Be sure to be flexible and afford members a variety of ways to participate.

- **Start thinking about funding**

The initial meetings are also a good opportunities to begin exploring and identifying potential sources of seed money and other types of resources available directly to your group or through coordination under an umbrella organization. You may have expenses for such things as printing flyers, duplicating minutes and mailing information to stakeholders. Discuss how you plan to meet these needs.

*Some general notes on “working in groups”*

The importance of qualified leadership is often overlooked as a stewardship organization develops. A part of your job as a cemetery stewardship group organizer is to identify and develop leaders. The task of recruiting and developing leaders has to be an ongoing activity through the lifetime of your cemetery stewardship group. When identifying new leaders for your organization, look for individuals who have shown that they:

- Want to succeed and want their group to succeed
- Communicate well with people
- Can motivate people to take collective action
- Are knowledgeable about the cemetery
- Have an allegiance to the cemetery and the association
- Know how to share power

Some general points to keep in mind are:

- You should search continually for many potential leaders, not just rely on one or two selected at the outset of this process.
- Leaders can become burned out. Have new leaders ready to step in when necessary.
- Keep your organization open and flexible enough to bring new members and leaders into your stewardship group.

*Delegate, delegate, delegate*

As group organizer it is important to not try to do everything yourself. Your best contributions to the stewardship group are your abilities and skills to organize. Therefore, try to delegate other responsibilities that play to other's abilities and skills. The following is a list of possible responsibilities which could be delegated to other members in the core group:

- **Make an inventory of useful information about your cemetery**  
A cemetery information inventory is a collection of facts about the site including the history, ownership, population and other elements unique to the cemetery.
- **Identify issues**  
Issues and concerns can be identified through surveys sent to nearby residents or through a series of cemetery stewardship meetings. The concerns may deal with maintenance, physical improvements, preservation of unique features or other special interest concerns such as heritage tourism.
- **Review stewardship goals**  
The draft stewardship mission plan should be reviewed and changed as you continue to develop and evolve as an active working group.
- **Review and evaluation**  
The progress of the plan must be monitored and evaluated on a regular basis to ensure its success. Periodic evaluations should be done to recognize successes, detect problems, and suggest improvements in the program.

## Step Five: the First General Meeting

When the core group feels confident to move forward, set a general meeting. Nobody likes to attend meetings that are unproductive and a waste of time. As the cemetery stewardship group organizer, you have the opportunity and responsibility to make meetings productive and even pleasant. The following is a guide.

- Decide on a convenient time and date to meet by consulting with your core group and stakeholders
- Locate a meeting place that is centrally located, politically neutral and familiar to the stakeholders.
- The meeting location and arrangement of the room are very important and will establish the mood and tone of friendliness for the meeting.
- Advertise the event via flyers, public service announcements, church bulletins, social media, etc.
- Develop a well-planned agenda for the first meeting.
- Try to estimate the size of the expected attendance. The room should be comfortable but not so large as to make the people feel lost.
  - Set up the room for the meeting in advance; if at all possible try to arrange seating so participants can conveniently look each other in the eye while speaking.
  - The room temperature should be comfortable.
  - Set up and test any special audio-visual equipment in advance.
  - Serve refreshments only if it will enhance the friendliness of the meeting and not interrupt it.
- Make sure you have a sign-in sheet with space for participant's contact information

**TIP:** Stick to the agenda and meet only when necessary, as too many meetings burn out volunteers. Try to limit meetings to an hour.

- Determine a method of follow-up to remind the cemetery volunteers of the upcoming meeting. This may be done by use of phone calls, letters, social media, and fliers.

### **Step Six: Developing a Cemetery Stewardship Plan**

If a stewardship organization is viewed as a permanent entity to oversee care and protection of the cemetery, then steps need to be taken to address changes that will occur as the group develops and as goals are accomplished. The health and vitality of a cemetery depends on the ability of its stewards to plan for its future. A cemetery stewardship plan is a guide that provides a framework for present and future decision making. It contains broad statements about what the stakeholders would like to have happen (goals) and principles they would like to see followed (policies). It also contains suggestions for strategies on how to reach goals. Having a set of operating guidelines and procedures in place provides structure for current and future oversight. For a good example of a stewardship plan, visit the St. Michael's Cemetery Foundation web site and review the document developed by SMCF in accordance with accepted historic cemetery management practices and standards ([stmichaelscemetery.org](http://stmichaelscemetery.org)).

Sample One-Year Cemetery Plan Development Guideline:

1. The Basics Check List:
  - a. Is the cemetery registered on the Florida Master Site File (see Chapter VIII)?
  - b. Do you have a simple map and other documentation (see Chapter IX and Appendices D and E)?
  - c. Is your information stored in two separate places?
2. Identify one to three issues that are of major concern for the cemetery (ex., documentation, landscape maintenance, marker repairs, etc.)
3. Form a committee to identify strategies and goals for addressing each issue
4. Identify available resources that can be utilized to assist the committee develop their plan of action (ex., in-kind consultants, grant avenues, etc.)

Remember, members of PACT and the UWF Archaeology Institute are always available to answer questions, offer support, and assist you. Do not hesitate to ask for help as you implement your plans and work to provide sound stewardship for the historic cemetery resources you oversee.

Helen Gibson, Rhoda Gonzalez Warren, Renea Brown, Nicole Grinnan, Della Scott-Ireton, and Margo S. Stringfield

## VII. PERFORMING HISTORICAL RESEARCH

Most historical research may be accomplished by utilizing online resources that have been digitized for public use. Resources that are not yet digitized or that are not available for public access online can be easily found at your local/regional archives, library, genealogical facility, County Property Appraiser's office, Latter-Day Saints Family History Centers, or through local/regional newspaper archives. Most of these facilities do charge for copies that are made of their records. Be prepared to read microfilm, microfiche, and an array of handwritten documents.

### **Finding the Original Deed**

You will need the date that your cemetery was established for a variety of reasons; the main reason is for the Historic Cemetery Form. You can often find a copy of the cemetery deed in the county's deed books. These deed books are normally organized in two ways: by grantee and by grantor. The grantor organization allows you to search by the person who sold the land, and the grantee organization allows you to search by the person who bought the land. These books cover a number of years and are typically arranged alphabetically. They usually have a business section in the index that includes churches, cemeteries, and other organizations required to file for business licenses. This index is where you need to start. Quickly scan through these sections to find your cemetery. These indexes are not always all-inclusive, so you might have to search for deeds by the owner's name and the property location /coordinates. Any time that the ownership of the cemetery changed, there should be a deed that reflects this change of ownership. Once you find the earliest deed that states the name of the established cemetery, note the name of the previous owner, and then search for older deeds using that name. This previous owner was quite likely the person who established a cemetery on the property.

## **Identifying Unmarked Burials**

The beginning step in identifying previously unregistered and/or possibly unmarked burials is to make a list of the current marked burials, then walk your cemetery and visually check the grave markers. Now would be a good time to begin mapping your cemetery also, as knowing where the known burials are located could help you in locating any unmarked burials. Ideally, there should be a registry of who is buried in which plot on what date for every cemetery, but that is not always the case. The registry could have been lost over the years or misplaced by its various owners. If your cemetery has a registry, check the names on your current list of markers against the cemetery registry. Make another list of the names that are not found on both lists. This new list will be the starting point for researching previously unregistered and possibly unmarked burials in your cemetery.

If you do not have a registry, you might begin searching local and regional newspaper obituaries. This task is tedious and requires a substantial amount of time. You will need to search from the date your cemetery was established until the time that burials ceased. Obituaries commonly provide information regarding where the burial took place. Just keep in mind that it is not uncommon for newspapers to misprint the location of where a burial was held. When the name of your cemetery appears in an obituary, note the burial information and cross reference it with your list of current markers. If the deceased's name is not found on this list, add this person to your list of previously unregistered and/or possibly unmarked burials. Some religious organizations keep records of their members' burials. You will need to identify these organizations in your area and develop good contacts within them in order to request access to these records. Follow the same steps as above and place any new names you encounter in the appropriate list. Funeral homes also keep records of whom they bury and where, as well as who paid for the burial. Death certificates often include the location of the person's burial. These documents can be ordered from the State Health Department. Death certificates can also be found on genealogical websites.

The people on your list of previously unregistered and/or possibly unmarked burials can likely never be positively identified by location. It is possible that some of



the people on your list may have been reinterred as it is not uncommon for families to move their loved one's remains to a different cemetery. When it is necessary to confirm the presence or absence of an unmarked grave, proceed with caution and respect. A small-diameter probe can be used to test the earth for grave vaults and sunken slabs.

Knowing the origins and backgrounds of people in your cemetery can help you understand its importance to the community it serves. For example, is there a prominent civic organization, job type, or religious affiliation visible in the cemetery? What percentage of the deceased was born locally? Do you have any war veterans? Discovering these facts will allow you to understand the community within your cemetery and reveal information that could also be useful when applying for grants. Common sources to consult for your initial research include:

- **Genealogical Websites:** There are many genealogical websites that provide researchers with a variety of resources such as census and voter lists; birth, marriage and death certificates; military, immigration and travel records; and public member family trees. Some of these sites charge fees to access their records, some do not. Ancestry.com is a for-pay site that is a fast way to research the people buried in your cemetery.
- **Census Records:** By looking at federal, state, and city census records, a researcher can obtain a list of the names of people who resided in a particular household, as well as their race, occupation, age, birthplace, level of education, street address, marital state, native heritage, and one-generation heritage. Federal census records are taken every ten years, while state and city census records are taken at various intervals.
- **City Directories:** City directories are compiled by street addresses and/or the last name of the head of household. These directories can fill in gaps left by the census records. Directories provide information regarding the head of household's address, profession, resident status, and spouse. Some city directories provide the race of the individual. City directories also include business advertisements. These advertisements can provide additional information about the people who are buried in your cemetery.

## **Discovering Artisans**

The structures (monuments, grave markers, iron fencing, etc.) in your cemetery were made by either an individual or local company, or were ordered from outside the community. These creators are the artisans of your cemetery. Researching cemetery artisans will provide you with additional insight into your cemetery.

Some civic organizations are known to have offered burial insurance to their members. This insurance would occasionally provide custom grave markers. Researching the symbols used by civic organizations in your area can help to identify such sites.

Many artisans working with marble signed their structures. It is most common for grave markers and slabs to be signed on the bottom right-hand corner of either the front or back of the structure. Signatures could consist of an initial and a last name or a company name, and may contain the city and/or state in which the artisan works. After identifying an artisan, look through the city directory to see if you can locate an advertisement for their business. Local vernacular artisans may not sign their work, but you will be able to group their works together by their stylistic or formal similarities.

## **Map Research**

Maps from various time periods are useful sources of information. For example, a series of historic maps may reveal whether your cemetery shrank or grew in size. They also help to develop perspectives regarding the use of the land surrounding the cemetery. Common sources of historic maps include the County Property Appraiser's office and Sanborn Fire Insurance maps.

Catherine Eddins  
UWF Archaeology Institute  
Cemetery Outreach Coordinator

## VIII. DOCUMENTATION

Historic cemeteries are an important aspect of a community's history and heritage. They present material culture that is a reflection of local people and events. This section will define cultural resources, describe the Florida Master Site File (FMSF) and the Division of Historical Resources' role in the protection of cultural resources, and provide a list of important resources for cemetery stewards.

One of the most important things one can do to preserve and protect a cemetery is to document it. Often, papers associated with a historic cemetery end up in someone's closet or attic. Over time, these papers can be lost due to a variety of reasons (a death, move, fire, insects, mold, etc.). There are several simple steps you can take to insure your cemetery is not ever "lost".

The first two steps go hand in hand. If your cemetery has not been listed on the Florida Master Site File (FMSF) you will want to start the process to insure that the cemetery is officially registered with the State. Then, make a duplicate copy (either in digital or hard copy form) of all related cemetery material and take the copy to your local library, genealogical or historical society, or local museum for inclusion in their collections. This way a duplicate copy exists should something happen to the originals, and other people with an interest in the cemetery will have access to your information, too.

### **The Florida Master Site File**

By definition, cultural resources are "evidence of past human activity" (USDA 2014). This broad term can be applied to objects ranging from prehistoric stone tools to Civil War artillery, intangible expressions such as oral traditions and folklore, and even historic places like shipwrecks and cemeteries. These nonrenewable resources allow us to piece together our history and are part of what make cultures unique around the world.

The Florida Master Site File is the state's database of information on archaeological sites, historic districts, structures, bridges, and cemeteries. Each site is given a distinct inventory number (site number) that refers to the state and county in which it is located. The FMSF contains such information as location, the type of site, related research notes and documents, and its eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Although the FMSF is not accessible to the general public, contacting the staff at the Division of Historical Resources (DHR) is the first step in learning if your historic cemetery has been listed. Contact information for the FMSF can be found below:

Email: [sitefile@dos.state.fl.us](mailto:sitefile@dos.state.fl.us)

Phone: 850.245.6440

Fax: 850.245.6439

Address: R. A. Gray Building  
500 S. Bronough St. Room 425  
Tallahassee, FL 32399

### **Documenting Your Historic Cemetery**

In regards to cultural resources, identification is key to protection. If your cemetery has already been recorded, contacting the FMSF will reveal when it was last documented. Occasionally, site file updates may be necessary when new information has been obtained, such as an expansion of the cemetery or the recent location of unmarked graves. If a historic cemetery is not currently listed, the following instructions outline the appropriate procedures to begin its future preservation and protection.

1. Although there are some exceptions, sites are generally considered historically significant if they are 50 years or older. A quick examination of death dates on your cemetery's headstones and markers can allow you to quickly judge whether your cemetery is eligible for listing. If unknown or not available, contact your

county's property appraiser, historical society, or genealogical society for assistance in finding when the property was established as a place for burial.

2. If your cemetery has never been listed, you will need to obtain a Cemetery Site Number from the FMSF. Completely filling out a Number Assignment Request Form and emailing it to the FMSF will ensure your cemetery's place within the Master Site File. Copies of all FMSF forms and instructions on how to accurately fill them out can be found on DHR's website at: [flheritage.com/preservation/siteFile/documents.cfm](http://flheritage.com/preservation/siteFile/documents.cfm). This form will ask for your contact information, the cemetery's name, and its location and can be emailed to the site file for a quick response.
3. Once a site number has been assigned to your cemetery, the next step is to gather information relevant to your cemetery. This information will be logged on a Cemetery Site File Form, also found at the website above. In addition, a "Guide to the Historical Cemetery Form" is available which details required information and tips on how to obtain this data. A review of this guide prior to a site visit is recommended so that you will be fully prepared to identify significant information. For example, you will be tasked with recording information on the cemetery's location, history, descriptions, and your research methods during this process.

Visits to your local genealogical website or library to gather information regarding the history of your cemetery is advised. Useful information that will help you in this process includes any details concerning the cemetery's date of establishment and historically significant people or families buried within. If the ownership of the cemetery is unknown, contact your county's property appraiser to determine the property's current deed holder. Be sure that the address of the cemetery matches the address on file with the property appraiser. This is also a good time and place to investigate the history of the cemetery's ownership.

Make a site visit to your historic cemetery. You will need to conduct a simple survey of your cemetery in order to complete the Cemetery Site File Form. Keep in mind that there is no right or wrong way to survey your cemetery

as each site is unique. In addition to the “Guide to the Historical Cemetery Form”, Sharyn Thompson’s *Florida’s Historic Cemeteries: A Preservation Handbook* (2004) is a valuable resource that can also be freely accessed online at: [flheritage.com/archaeology/cemeteries/documents/flhistcm.pdf](http://flheritage.com/archaeology/cemeteries/documents/flhistcm.pdf). This guide was designed to assist cemetery stewards by detailing cemetery guidelines, recording and survey methods, as well as preservation techniques to suit your site-specific needs.

A section of the Cemetery Site File Form will ask for your opinion of the resource’s significance in relation to its eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Generally, resources are considered eligible for this listing if they are somehow associated with nationally significant people, places, or events, or if they exhibit unique aspects of architecture or cultural heritage. If your cemetery’s NRHP eligibility is in question, consult a local historian or archaeologist.

4. After all of the cemetery’s information has been collected and recorded on the Historical Cemetery Form it is time to submit your cemetery’s FMSF packet electronically. The packet will include: (1) the completed site form along with any additional applicable information; (2) at least one photograph of the cemetery depicting its surrounding area; and (3) a USGS map indicating the location of the site. Electronic versions of USGS maps can be found online at: [usgs.gov](http://usgs.gov). Once this packet has been submitted to the Master Site File, your historic cemetery will soon be listed among other historic sites and cemeteries in Florida - the first step towards the preservation and protection of your community’s cultural resource.

Lauren Walls  
Archaeologist, New South  
Associates

Gregg Harding  
FPAN Graduate Assistant

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2004 *Florida's Historic Cemeteries: A Preservation Handbook*. Historic Tallahassee Preservation Board: Tallahassee.

United States Department of Agriculture [USDA]

2014 National Resources Conservation Series: Cultural Resources.  
<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/technical/nra/cultural/>, accessed September 30, 2014.

## Additional Resources

Florida Anthropological Society

<http://www.fasweb.org/>

Florida Historical Society

<https://myfloridahistory.org/>

Florida Department of State Division of Historical Resources

<http://www.flheritage.com/index.cfm>

Florida Department of State Division of Historical Resources Abandoned Cemeteries Webpage

<http://www.flheritage.com/archaeology/cemeteries/index.cfm>

Florida Public Archaeology Network

<http://www.flpublicarchaeology.org/>

Florida Public Archaeology Network's Cemetery Resource Protection Training Webpage:

<http://www.flpublicarchaeology.org/programs/CRPT.php>

Society for American Archaeology's Selected Cemetery Archaeology Projects

<http://www.saa.org/ForthePublic/Resources/ArchaeologyWebsites/SelectedCemeteryArchaeologyProjects/tabid/286/Default.aspx>

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## **IX. MAPPING CEMETERIES**

Do not be intimidated by the mapping process. And, do not feel you must be absolutely spot on with mapping. Even a simple map of the cemetery will be useful in a number of ways.

If you are creating a simple (not to scale) map, an easy way to manage the project is to break up the cemetery into adjoining blocks on a sheet of graph paper. Divide the site up into equal sized squares and work on one square at a time. If you start at one end of the site and work towards the other end using this divide-and-conquer approach, the job will not seem quite so daunting. Furthermore, if several individuals are involved in the mapping process, you will cover more ground and more easily organize the maps you generate. However, even with one person working, you will be surprised at how manageable and non-threatening the job will be if taken on in smaller pieces.

You will want to sketch in each marked grave in the square you are working in, label the marker, and have a corresponding information sheet with data on that particular marker. You will also want to photograph the marker. Appendices D and E include a sample information gathering sheet as well as an example of a simple map. Once you have a site map, photographs, and an information form for each stone, you have a point of reference to work forward from.

Documentation is vital not only in recording individual sites and information but is also invaluable for documenting damages caused by vandalism or natural disasters. The simple map will prove to be an excellent tool that documents what exists now in order to demonstrate changes which may occur in the future.

More elaborate mapping can provide many layers of information. Created in 2000, the simple hand drawn site map for St. Michael's Cemetery has evolved into a complex product. The interactive St. Michael's Cemetery geographic information system (GIS) with its map and associated data base of tombstone information is invaluable in both managing the cultural resources of the site and is being used to answer a number

of research questions. The GIS also includes a survey of the subsurface of the site as well as a comprehensive botanical survey and topographical map. To learn more about *The Search for the Hidden People of St. Michaels Cemetery* Project go to [uwf.edu/gis/smc](http://uwf.edu/gis/smc) or [stmichaelscemetery.org](http://stmichaelscemetery.org).

Lauren Walls  
Archaeologist, New South  
Associates

Gregg Harding  
FPAN Graduate Assistant

## **X. DEALING WITH DISCOVERIES OF SURFACE BONES IN CEMETERIES**

From time to time scattered skeletal remains (either faunal or human) may be exposed on the surface of a cemetery. Bones may appear as a result of natural processes (wildlife dying, graves eroding) or human disturbance (vandalism to graves). It is important that the determinations of animal versus human bone and natural versus intentional disturbance be made as soon as possible, since these determinations will guide your response.

### **Recommended procedures:**

1. Mark the bone's location with a pin flag, and note its location relative to existing graves.
2. Determine whether the bone is human or faunal.

Sometimes this is immediately obvious (for example if there is associated fur or feathers), but in many cases this is a difficult determination for a non-specialist to make. Fortunately, there are a number of excellent reference books available for purchase, such as *Human and Nonhuman Bone Identification: A Concise Field Guide* by Diane L. France (CRC Press, 2011).

Alternatively, you can consult a local osteological expert to assist in this determination. At University of West Florida, Department of Anthropology, these include:

- Dr. Joanne Curtin (474-2795; [jcurtin@uwf.edu](mailto:jcurtin@uwf.edu))
- Dr. Kristina Killgrove (474-3287; [killgrove@uwf.edu](mailto:killgrove@uwf.edu))
- Ms. Cathy Parker (474-2087; [cparker@uwf.edu](mailto:cparker@uwf.edu))

Often, the determination can be made from a digital photograph (preferably with scale) emailed to one of the above. In other cases it may be necessary to collect the bone and bring it to the specialist for closer examination. If the bone is removed its original location, the bone must be labeled and the location where it was found must be clearly marked.

3. If the bone is determined to be nonhuman, simply discard it. No further action need be taken.
4. If the bone is human, the next step is to determine its origin. The bone's location vis-à-vis existing marked graves is crucial here, as are any indications of the age or sex of the individual from which it came.

If the surface human bone appears to be the result of deliberate vandalism of a grave, this should be reported to the local police as it is a violation of Florida Law, Chapter 872.02 (see report section III). If the surface human bone appears to be the result of erosion of an existing marked grave, stabilization and restoration will be necessary (see report sections XII and XIII). Any surface human remains exposed through erosion or vandalism should be replaced in the grave prior to restoration and repair.

A. Joanne Curtin, Ph.D.  
UWF Associate Professor of  
Anthropology

## **XI. LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE**

The proper maintenance and protection of a cemetery landscape is important in preserving the history related to the site. As time progresses, vegetation grows and the ground shifts, all of which can change a cemetery landscape a great deal. When the maintenance of a cemetery has been stopped for a prolonged period of time, the result is often a dense vegetation layer that hides monuments, headstones, fences, and other important features. The community, various organizations, and cemetery leadership may want to organize a cemetery cleaning day as a way to retake the site by removing vegetation. If not done correctly, this activity can result in a loss of historic vegetation and damage to cemetery features, and can be dangerous to volunteers conducting the work. Understanding the historical importance, development, landscape, and vegetation will help guide future maintenance and cleaning of the site.

### **Understanding the Landscape**

The majority of cemeteries have been developed using a site plan that consists of a road or path system, burial locations, vegetation layouts, and other important features. Having the original site plan is helpful, but with most cemeteries, this document is usually missing or has been significantly changed. The creation of an existing site plan is extremely important for various reasons, and it will be part of the maintenance plan and help guide future cleaning efforts. Surveying the site will assist in identifying lost or unknown features such as paths, walls, trees, and vegetation layouts. Understanding if vegetation was originally intended to be part of the design or inadvertently started growing, will guide future maintenance work. Stewards should consider mapping in botanical landscape features (trees, scrubs, bulbs, etc.) as they make a simple site map of grave markers as a means of basic documentation of the botanical landscape.

## Maintenance Plan

Developing a maintenance plan, landscape contract, and protocols for volunteer cleaning days is important to the preservation of the cemetery. The goal of a landscape maintenance plan is to develop a scope of work, identify who can do the work, and on what time schedule the work should be done. This will include mowing, weeding, edging, pruning, trimming trees, controlling pests, and other site work. Using this information, a detailed landscape contract can be developed. Using the St. Michael's Cemetery Foundation landscape maintenance contract as an example, a site-specific contract can be developed for other historic cemeteries (see Appendix F). This plan is based on specifics found in the Chicora Foundation guide to landscape maintenance best practices ([chicorafoundation.org](http://chicorafoundation.org)).

If funds are not available for paid landscape service, supervised volunteers can be invaluable in maintaining the cemetery. The key word here is *supervised*. Volunteers must have supervision and the supervisors must be aware of and follow the recommended best practices as closely as is practical. A good guide to best practices in landscape maintenance is available online at Chicora Foundation website. The suggestions offered by Chicora Foundation can be adapted to fit the practical needs of any cemetery.

When volunteers are utilized, they should receive information prior to arrival on site with direction for what to expect and what to do and not do. In Pensacola, Keep Pensacola Beautiful (KPB) has provided invaluable volunteer services to area cemeteries in need. Experience with KPB has led to the application of common sense approaches that also conform to best practices.

Due to often limited funds and the cost of professional landscape service providers, the most economical way for stewards to address the landscape needs of overgrown cemeteries is with the use of volunteers. Volunteers can come from various sources: small groups of individuals who are interested in historical and genealogical information from older cemeteries; groups who may be interested in helping the community, church groups, family members, scouting troops, military personnel, and

school students seeking community service credits for college, lodge members, civic organizations, young professional groups, court-ordered community service workers, etc. In short, volunteers can come from all walks of life. However, it is extremely important that all volunteers, whether paid or not, receive proper training before being permitted to work. This is for their safety and for the safety of the site.

Abandoned cemeteries pose a huge challenge to communities in terms of landscape management. Overgrowth is more than just high grass that covers the area. It could include some young trees or saplings that need to be removed or thick, thorny vines that intertwine with adjacent grave markers. Fallen trees and limbs need to be removed, and sunken grave sites can pose hazards to everyone working on the site. Keep Pensacola Beautiful plans for volunteer work days by sending instructional flyers to volunteers, planning specific projects for each work day, and by making sure there is ample supervision. One main tenet is not to overreach the scope of volunteer capabilities. For example, saplings larger than 5 inches in diameter are not removed by volunteers, nor are established palmettos.

Volunteer equipment used will normally consist of rakes, brush cutters, loppers, handsaws (by adult supervisors), and string trimmers. Debris should be hauled away immediately in order to keep the working area clear of debris; it is extremely important to keep your cutting area clear in order to avoid damage to grave markers, injuries to the volunteers, and broken equipment.

Whether the workers are hired or volunteers, all have to be briefed on safety issues and the proper uses of equipment. Volunteers will need to know what to wear (ex., closed toed shoes, long pants, hats), what to bring (ex. sun screen, water, snacks, basic hand equipment), as well as what to expect (ex. length of day, tasks to be carried out). Volunteers may need to learn how to use certain types of equipment as well; improper use can damage head stones, monuments, and historic vegetation. An informative flyer distributed in advance of a clean-up day along with onsite instruction prior to work starting is crucial in providing a good experience for the volunteer and preserving the funerary landscape. An on-site briefing should stress patience and the

dangers of unsafe practices. Prevention of injuries and the preservation of the integrity and dignity the cemetery are paramount. To this end, training volunteers is essential.

All volunteers must be attentive to actions they are performing and understand what can and cannot be classified as landscape debris. Further they must be able to distinguish between what can be removed (ex., modern broken glass flower containers) and what cannot be removed (ex., marine seashells and other older placed materials). When in doubt, volunteers should be told to immediately ask a supervisor.

A typical volunteer workday at a cemetery should be planned well in advance. The following agenda should be adhered to as closely as possible:

- Provide directions to the site along with parking information
- Make available information on what to expect, what to wear, and what to bring
- Gather and brief volunteers on safety issues as a group
- Review list of items that can be trashed and items that CANNOT be removed
- Divide volunteers into smaller groups and review uses of equipment they will be assigned
- Assigned working sites should be marked; volunteers should remain in their designated areas until assigned work is completed and supervisors reassign them.

With planning and oversight, the use of volunteers can be a viable choice in landscape maintenance for stewards. And, volunteers often become stewards themselves if their experiences as volunteers is rewarding. Our historic cemeteries will be with us for the foreseeable future and they will need to be maintained. A well thought out approach to landscape management will help preserve, protect, and maintain the site for future generations.

Ross Pristera  
Historic Preservationist, UWF  
Historic Trust

Gwinn Corley  
Executive Director, Keep  
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## **XII. CONSERVATION ACTIONS FOR VOLUNTEERS**

It is often tempting to have volunteers carry out “repairs” in historic cemeteries. While volunteers can accomplish a variety of needful tasks, always remember to think carefully before acting. Having volunteers tackle a task beyond their abilities can inadvertently create a larger problem. The first thing to remember is DO NO HARM. Always approach activities in a well thought out manner and after consulting appropriate guides. Several areas where volunteers are often utilized include cleaning headstones, painting fences, and minor marker repairs. Here are some basic guidelines to follow:

### **Cleaning**

Always evaluate whether or not a stone actually needs to be cleaned. In historic cemeteries, it is appropriate to have a patina of age. Moreover, each time a stone is cleaned the face of the feature is impacted (even if in a small way). Normally, a stone is cleaned when breaks are mended (so mends blend with stone coloration) or when heavy biological buildup threatens the integrity of the stone or renders it unreadable.

Regrettably, over the years, many historic marbles and other stones in cemeteries have been cleaned with caustic cleaners such as bleach. NEVER use bleach or other caustic cleaners. Caustic cleaners are very harmful to the stone and also to surrounding vegetation. For historic marbles and most other stones, potable (drinkable) water and a soft bristle brush (never metal) will achieve excellent results and remove the normal buildup of dirt and staining. Further, never use high pressure washers as they can scar the stone.

If more than water is called for, the UWF Archaeology Institute (working with a number of historic cemeteries) has found D/2 Biological Solution ([www.limeworks.us](http://www.limeworks.us)) to be very effective in removing heavy biological buildup. For removing biological growth from nooks and crannies use wood picks, tongue depressors, and soft toothbrushes. For paint removal, Safest Stripper is recommended. Both D/2 and Safest

Stripper are environmentally safe to use; however, instructions must be followed closely. Always have the Material Data Safety Sheet for any product used printed out and adjacent to the work site in case there is an unexpected reaction to the product. Even with products advertised as or thought to be non-caustic, test a small area on the lower back side of the marker with the product first to make sure there are no adverse reactions.

If you are cleaning a stone where running potable water is not available you will need to carry water in with you. Do not tackle more markers than you have water to wash and thoroughly rinse with. It is better to do one or two at a time than stretch your resources. Remember, these guidelines are for simple cleaning that can be done by volunteers. Complex problems should be left to professional conservators. Under no circumstances should one experiment; this will likely make the situation worse.

### **Metal Fences and Concrete Coping**

Again, remember to DO NO HARM. Assess the problem and before acting, watch the excellent National Park Service National Center for Preservation (NCPTT) video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6fAacWpM8XQ>. While some repairs and cleaning/painting can be accomplished by volunteers, know when to call in a professional. Major repairs to historic metal fencing should be done by professionals.

Often metal fences have been painted a number of times over the years. It is common to have drips on concrete coping build up. This old paint can be removed using a product called 3/M Safest Stripper. This product is safe for volunteers to use, but remember to read the instructions, follow them closely, and to download the Material Data Safety Sheet so it is on site with volunteers using the product.

### **Simple Repairs to Stone Markers:**

Do not allow volunteers to tackle jobs that require professional conservators.... no matter what. Before undertaking any repairs, read suggested materials and determine what you can and cannot tackle. Of particular concern are whether to allow volunteers to experiment with cleaners, work on complex mends, or undertake projects that require scaffolding or a hoist. If in doubt, you need a professional conservator.

Simple resets and leveling projects can be successfully completed by skilled volunteers. A good guide to follow for simple leveling, resetting, and mending tasks can be found in the Michigan Historic Cemeteries Preservation Guide:

[http://www.michigan.gov/documents/hal\\_mhc\\_shpo\\_Cemetery\\_Guide\\_105082\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/hal_mhc_shpo_Cemetery_Guide_105082_7.pdf)

## **Paper Trails**

Whether you are cleaning or leveling a stone or painting a fence, you will want to document your actions. A sample conservation form for volunteer efforts is found in Appendix G.

If you do need a professional conservator, you will want to have read the above guides so you can effectively communicate your needs to a professional. And, you will want to be able to put your needs into writing. Refer to Chapter XIII for points to cover in a contract for services. A sample of what to expect in a conservation report is found in Appendix H.

Do not contract services without referrals from people working in the fields of historic preservation or archaeology. You want someone who has a proven track record and you want a conservator willing to provide you with documentation of what they have done. A sample of what to expect in a conservation report is found in Chapter \_\_, Cemetery Contracting.

Margo S. Stringfield, RPA  
PACT Project Facilitator

Other excellent resources include:

State of Florida

<http://www.flheritage.com/archaeology/cemeteries/index.cfm?page=Maintenance>

Chicora Foundation/ Cemetery preservation:

<http://chicora.org/cemetery-preservation.html>

National Park Service/ National Center for Preservation Technology and Training

<http://www.ncptt.nps.gov/>

Preserving Historic Cemeteries: Texas Preservation Guidelines:

<http://www.thc.state.tx.us/publications/guidelines/Preservecem.pdf>

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### **XIII. GUIDELINES FOR CONTRACTING GRAVEMARKER REPAIRS**

Small historic cemeteries are often managed by volunteer stewards rather than professionals in the field of historic preservation. At times it is difficult for the non-professional cemetery steward to know what needs to be done and how to ensure that what is done is appropriate. While supervised volunteers can undertake a variety of conservation measures following professional guidelines, it often falls to the volunteer stewards to contract for services that require a professional conservator. The following information is meant to be a guide for the non-professional cemetery steward who has the responsibility of contracting for professional services. By working the points below into written contracts, both the steward and the service provider will have a clear idea of final product and project expectations.

First, remember that only simple projects such as leveling small markers, adhering small unbroken markers to bases, and simple cleaning should be undertaken by supervised volunteers who are following professional guidelines. Any project that involves the use of adhesives or binders to mend broken stones, requires the use of scaffolding to raise substantial stones, or requires specialized cleaning should be undertaken by a professional.

Always remember that the first standard to follow is to *do no harm*. Most repair and cleaning needs will wait until funds are available and a qualified team is in place. Do not be tempted to do it yourself or to hire a general masonry contractor who is not specifically trained to work with historic building materials and binders. Only a stone conservator specializing in historic structure repairs should be used for stone and masonry work in historic cemeteries. When it is time to hire a professional the following guidelines will help ensure that all parties involved with the project understand what is expected.

## **Credentials**

Always hire a conservator based on qualifications - never strictly the lowest bid. Ask to see a portfolio of their work, ask for references, and *check those references*. All professional conservators will adhere to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. (Link is at end of this chapter; familiarize yourself with these standards before you talk with a potential service provider) Although the Standards generally address treatments for historic buildings, they are equally applicable to funerary architecture. Have the contract state that the service provider and all others employed on the project will adhere to the Standards. Also, while you will likely be talking with the primary conservator, make sure you know exactly who else will be employed by the conservator on the project and what their experience is. You do not want to be surprised by who shows up to work on your site.

## **Determining Costs and What to Expect**

You should have a master plan for overall management in place. Within this plan you should have a priority list of markers or resources that need treatment. Most professional conservators will not give you a dollar amount on each individual marker because there may be unseen problems that surface when work gets underway. What looks like a simple mend or re-set could become complicated by underlying problems and affect the amount of time they spend on it. What usually happens is that the contracting party (you) provides the prospective contractor a priority list of sites to assess. The conservator will look at the priority list, the features themselves, assess how much time and materials the proposed project will require, and generate a cost estimate.

While there will always be a minimum number of markers a contractor may think they can get to in a particular session, most conservators will work down your priority list as far as they can get given the time and/or money available. If you have hired a well-researched and reputable professional conservator, you will generally get more for your money than you expect. But, don't expect miracles... in historic cemeteries there is always more to do than your funds allow. Hiring a professional

stone conservator is going to be expensive. One tip for getting the biggest return for your dollar: if you are hiring a firm from another area of the country, travel and lodging will need to be worked in to their cost projection. Think about finding in-kind housing for them and donated frequent flyer miles to get them to the job site.

### **Contractual Issues**

Along with specifying what the conservation team will do, the time the job will likely take, and the cost, the contract should include verbiage addressing the following:

**CLEANING:** Each feature to be addressed should be evaluated for cleaning needs. Generally, stones are cleaned prior to repairs so mortar matches stone as closely as possible. Some conservators recommend cleaning the entire stone, others focus on the area around the break or repair to give a clear indication of mortar/stone relationship. To save money, trained volunteers can clean in advance of the conservator. Make sure you have a clear understanding of how the cleaning process will be handled and who is responsible for doing it.

**RESETTING:** Where needed (and where possible), features are to be realigned and reset. The base of markers should be excavated to determine the cause of the shift in alignment so that the problem can be corrected before final resetting. Once excavations are complete, a layer of clean pea gravel should be laid down as the foundation for smaller markers, while larger monuments may require a level masonry foundation.

**REATTACHING/PINNING:** If the conservator determines pinning is necessary to reinforce structural repairs, threaded nylon pins, threaded stainless steel pins, or roughened stainless steel pins are to be used. Adhesives are to be two-part structural epoxies. Mortars should be consistent with original materials. Do not allow the use of cement or other hard adhesives. No traces of adhesive are to be exposed on the stone faces.

**FILLS AND IN FILLS:** Simple breaks, cracks and voids in stone markers are to be filled with a soft lime mortar mixture resembling the stone in texture, color, and absorbance. The fills should only extend to the edge of the break and should form a level surface with the stone. Again, do not allow for the use of cement or other hard adhesives.

FINAL REPORT: The conservator must produce a conservation report including: before and after photographs; details of treatments applied to each site (including names of products utilized). Do not release the final payment for services prior to receiving the final report. Expect the professional conservator to keep records of treatments as they proceed (not addressing them as an afterthought). It should not take an inordinate amount of time for the service provider to produce a final report, but you must have it. Review the work and report using this guideline before issuing final payment for services. A good rule of thumb for the cemetery steward is *“Would I accept the quality of this work at my own home?”*

ADDITIONALLY: Contractors should not leave spills, drips, or smears on the feature. Materials related to repairs and repair activities should be cleaned up and removed from the site by the contractor; this includes general trash such as food wrappers and cigarette butts.

It is only common sense to make sure there is a representative of the cemetery stopping by daily to check on the work progress. You will learn a lot and you will have the opportunity to see the types of treatments being applied. When finished, some treatments cannot be seen (such as sub-surface re-sets and pinning). All reputable contractors should welcome having the contracting party around.

Note: the above guidelines are regarding general conservation techniques geared toward stone (marble and granite) and lime mortar masonry binders. Different cemeteries often contain different structural materials and should be assessed based on materials in use at that specific site. The use of repair materials should always be consistent with the original material used to construct the feature.

Sharyn Thompson  
Director, Center for Historic  
Cemeteries Preservation

Margo S. Stringfield, RPA  
PACT Project Facilitator

Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation  
<http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab/stand.htm>



## XIV. VANDALISM

Unfortunately, vandalism sometimes happens. There are several simple steps the cemetery steward can take to help deter vandalism:

1. Secure the site: If you can afford to fence the site and gate it, you will be able to have a first line of defense against intrusion.
2. Even if you cannot fence the site read Florida State Statute 872.02 (<http://www.flsenate.gov/Laws/Statutes/2011/872.02>) and post signage stating that cemetery vandalism is a felony offense. You might also want to have a phone number anyone can call to report vandalism (City/County law enforcement). Post signage (one sign on each side of the site) even if you are fenced.
3. If the site is close to an existing electrical grid, install an overhead light that comes on at dusk. Alternatively, consider motion-activated lighting. Even without a security system, anyone entering after dark thinks twice when lights come on. Note: Security systems are expensive to install and maintain. While a security system may be affordable for the well-funded organization, it is not generally affordable for the small stewardship group with limited funds. Even with a security system, vandalism can still happen – your funds may be better spent in other ways.
4. Be an active presence in the cemetery. Set up a schedule of 1-2 volunteers to walk the site (during the day) at intervals best suited to your volunteer resources. A show of presence and activity can deter potential vandals. If the site is isolated, make sure there are two people on the team and that each carries a cell phone on their person.
5. Let local law enforcement know you are visiting the site on a regular basis and ask if they can drive past the cemetery as their time permits. This serves a twofold purpose: you are showing your commitment to reducing opportunities

for crime through your active involvement, and you are reminding law enforcement officials that there is a potential vandalism target in the area. Seeing law enforcement in the area of a cemetery also acts to deter vandals.

6. If vandalism occurs, call local law enforcement and make a report. Be on site when officers arrive. Make sure you have the cards of all investigating officers involved and ask for the report number. Keep in touch with law enforcement to see if they have any leads. If an arrest is made, you will be given the public prosecutor's name and contact number. Keep in touch with them as well. Lastly, be sure to document the vandalism and get a cost estimate of damage (photographs, notes, rough map of locations).

Even the best efforts often cannot deter an individual intent on committing vandalism. However, individuals who vandalize cemeteries are usually not the brightest bulbs in the pack. For this reason, they often are apprehended due to careless mistakes. Stand fast in working with your local law enforcement agencies and public prosecutor's office so the offender is punished to the fullest extent of the law. Restitution for damages should be required in any plea bargain or sentencing recommendation.

Margo S. Stringfield, RPA  
PACT Project Facilitator

## XV. DISASTER PLANNING

Natural and man-made disasters can come in many forms, from severe weather and flooding to vandalism, just to name a few. One form of natural disaster familiar to residents of Florida is the tropical hurricane. Preparing homes and yards in advance of hurricane-force winds, heavy rains, and flooding is commonplace for Floridians. Preparing your cemetery for disasters is not unlike preparing your home and yard for severe weather. Some simple steps to take before and after disaster strikes will minimize the risk of damage and allow for a more rapid and organized recovery.

Your stewardship group can begin by reading about disaster planning for cemeteries. Several excellent guides are available on line:

Disaster Preparedness and Response for Historic Cemeteries

<http://ncptt.nps.gov/blog/disaster-preparedness-and-response-for-historic-cemeteries/>

Chicora Foundation Disaster Planning

<http://www.chicora.org/pdfs/Cemetery%20Disaster%20Planning.pdf>

dPlan: The Online Disaster-Planning Tool for Cultural and Civic Institutions

<http://www.dplan.org/inst/about.asp>

After your core stewardship group is familiar with these background materials, meet as a group and explore how you can best apply recommended steps to your site. Select a team that will take a leadership role in preparing and responding. Choose someone to be the official disaster team leader and have a clear chain of command. Make a list of things to do and assign jobs. Compile a list with contact information of who needs to be contacted in case of emergency.

Your stewardship group should also consider the financial ramifications of disaster planning and recovery. Do you have any funds set aside for emergencies? If not, start putting some money in a fund that can grow over time. Remember, some financial

instruments like certificates of deposit (CDs) incur penalties for early withdrawals. Think about what you will do if you need immediate funds.

One key component of disaster planning is having an idea of what your assets are before a disaster strikes. Make a map of the cemetery, record tombstone information, and photograph individual markers (see chapters VIII and IX). Make notes on damages you can see during the course of mapping. You now have a primary record to use as a base reference in case there is a disaster and you need to assess your damages.

In times of calm, identify areas of your cemetery most susceptible to damage during natural disasters. Stones and fences that are in need of repair or are fragile are the sites most likely to be impacted by high winds. Unstable markers/monuments will also damage stones around them when they come down. Consider the natural environment within and around your cemetery as well. Trees should be evaluated by an arborist and dead or dying trees professionally removed. By removing dead material and opening the canopy, wind can pass through more easily. This measure results in less wind pressure on the tree. Healthy trees are also less likely to come down. When trees fall, subsurface features are often impacted along with the surface features.

Before a severe weather event, securing or removing loose items such as hoses, lightweight benches, and unsecured urns (etc.), lessens the chance they will become airborne and damage markers and fences. Also, if you know a major storm event is likely to impact the area, take the time to remove and discard common materials that often build up at individual sites. These materials (ex., glass containers, plant holders, figurines) are not only going to be damaged or destroyed, they will also become flying objects that may impact markers. Further, broken glass poses a safety hazard for the recovery clean-up team.

Do you have a professional you can contact for assistance after damage occurs? Have you established a stand-by volunteer or professional force to help with cleanup? After Hurricane Ivan, Marines Corps volunteers assisted in removing tree limbs and other debris at St. Michael's Cemetery in Pensacola. Identify a potential group and ask

them to be your “on call” help in such a case. SMC Foundation works with a specific stone conservator, has an arborist consultant, and works with a specific metal fence specialist. SMCF also works with other service providers on a regular basis. With established working relationships in place you are more likely to be able to go forward in an orderly manner after a disaster strikes.

After a severe weather event, visit your cemetery as soon as it is safe to do so. Conduct a preliminary walk over to check for obvious damages. REMEMBER: SAFTY FIRST. Do not enter the site until you know all downed power lines are safe per your utility company. Often you cannot see dangers, so watch where you walk. Consider closing the site until you have a good sense of how safe it is to allow public access. You do not want people hurting themselves or inadvertently damaging the site. Do not allow the public on site until it is safe for them to be there. Post signs at the entrance and around the perimeter of the site stating it is closed.

If caskets or skeletal remains are disturbed and exposed, cover them with a simple tarp that is weighted down around the edges. Use flagging tape/stakes to mark off the immediate area. In Escambia County, contact the UWF Archaeology Institute for assistance (850.474.3015). Further, UWF bio-archaeologist Dr. Joanne Curtain can be contacted in case of emergency (850.474.2797). See Chapter X for further guidance.

Take photos as soon as you can. Take both general overviews and photographs of individual sites that were impacted. If you have a pre-disaster set of images and notes on existing damage, you will be able to compare each site pre- and post-disaster.

Be very careful in removing debris. Overly aggressive clean-ups can result in the loss of important cemetery-related materials. If you hire a clean-up team, make sure they are reputable. They should be insured and carry workman’s comp for their workers. Give them instructions regarding what to pick up and what to leave in place. If you use volunteers, you will also want to give them instruction. In either case, have the disaster response team for your cemetery on site to oversee all clean-up activities. You want all involved to pay attention to what they are doing. Key phrases are: DO NO HARM and SAFETY FIRST.

Tree removal is a delicate process. Hire a known company and give them direction. You do not want to further harm markers under fallen limbs. Stump grinding is not recommended as burials can be impacted. Consider leaving the stump in place as hand removal of a stump under supervision can be costly. If the stump/roots need to be removed, you should have an archaeologist on site to monitor the work as it is highly likely skeletal remains will be caught up in the root system.

When major debris has been removed, organize your disaster team responders to further record and assess damages. Grid off your map of the cemetery, assign volunteers to a zone, and have them check each marker within their zone for damages. Indicate on a map the location and name of the damaged site, marker, or monument. Photograph damaged markers in detail. You will want to be able to document before and after conditions for a number of reasons, including getting estimates for repairs and making insurance claims. A map of the site, even a simple one, will be of great assistance in documenting damages.

This short overview is meant to get stewards thinking about approaches to protecting their cemetery resources. Finally, disaster will strike. Be prepared.

Margo S. Stringfield, RPA  
PACT Project Facilitator

## **APPENDICES**





## **A. DUTIES OF THE PROPERTY APPRAISER BY FUNCTION**

### **1. List Cemeteries on the Tax Roll** **§193.085**

The Property Appraiser shall ensure that all real property within his or her county is listed and valued on the real property assessment roll.

### **2. Determine an Assessed Value** **§193.023**

The Property Appraiser shall complete his or her assessment of the value of all property no later than July 1 of each year.

### **3. Daily Schedule of Deeds and Conveyances Filed for Record** **§695.22**

The Property Appraiser shall maintain current records of ownership and title as provided by the clerk of the circuit court in his or her respective county. Maintaining records includes posting all deeds and conveyances in order to keep a current record of ownership names and addresses.

### **4. Classification of Property by DOR Use Codes** **Florida Administrative Code**

Florida Administrative Code requires the Property Appraiser to classify each parcel of real property to indicate its use as determined for valuation purposes. This use is reflected in the DOR Use Codes applied to each real property parcel on the assessment roll.

### **5. Determine the Exempt Status of Property** **§196.011 & §497.260**

Every person or organization who, on January 1, has the legal title to real or personal property, except inventory, which is entitled by law to exemption from taxation as a result of its ownership and use shall, on or before March 1 of each year, file an application for exemption with the county property appraiser, listing and describing the property for which exemption is claimed and certifying its ownership and use.



## **B. ROLE OF THE PROPERTY APPRAISER CONCERNING CEMETERY PARCELS**

1. Add parcel to the tax roll by deed transaction.
2. Maintain records of owners' names and mailing addresses.
3. Preserve categories of different types of cemeteries for valuation purposes.
  - For profit Organization (i.e., LLC)
  - Non-profit Association
  - County Owned
  - Municipal (city) Owned
  - Community Association
  - Religious Institution
  - Fraternal Organization (cemetery is owned and beneficially operated)
  - Family Owned
  - Mausoleum- 2 acres or less
  - Columbarium -less than% acre
  - Columbarium- 5 acres or less located on the main campus of a state university
4. Determine the exempt status of a cemetery.



## C. EXEMPTION APPLICATION PROCESS FOR CEMETERIES

**Owner(s) of record must make an initial application by March 1<sup>st</sup>. [DR-504}**

The following information should accompany the application upon submission:

### *Evidence of Ownership*

- Name, address, phone number and the official title held by the steward filing the application on behalf of the organization or association
- Deed of record recorded in Escambia County
- Verification of Status with the following if the organization is incorporated:
  - Active status on file with Florida Division of Corporation [sunbiz.org]
  - Current Articles of Incorporation for the organization
- Current proof of 501(c)(3) Status, if applicable

### *Completed DR-504 with the following attachments:*

- Current Consumer's Certificate of Exemption, only if applicable
- If not incorporated, Articles of Association, Constitution/Bylaws
- Statement of Salaries
- Loan guarantees of /by any officer or trustee
- Contracts between applicant and any officer/member
- Schedules (services/supplies/reserves/mortgages)
- Statement of charges made by applicant for its services
- Statement of sales proceeds benefiting any officer/member

### *Additional Supporting Documents*

- Statement of Tangible Personal Property, only if applicable [DR-405]
- Any lease agreements of property rented to an individual or organization



## D. GRAVEMARKER RECORDING FORM

**Cemetery:** \_\_\_\_\_ **FMSF # 8ES** \_\_\_\_\_  
Feature # \_\_\_\_\_ Recorder: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Recording: \_\_\_\_\_

**MARKER:** **Name of Decedent (last name, first name, middle)**

Date of Birth (M/D/YYYY) \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Death (M/D/YYYY) \_\_\_\_\_

Marker Material (marble/granite/other) \_\_\_\_\_

Condition \_\_\_\_\_

**Short Description:** (iconography, etc.)

### AFFILIATIONS:

Kin terms (wife of, etc)

Non kin terms (lodge, veteran, etc)

Inscription(verbatim) \_\_\_\_\_

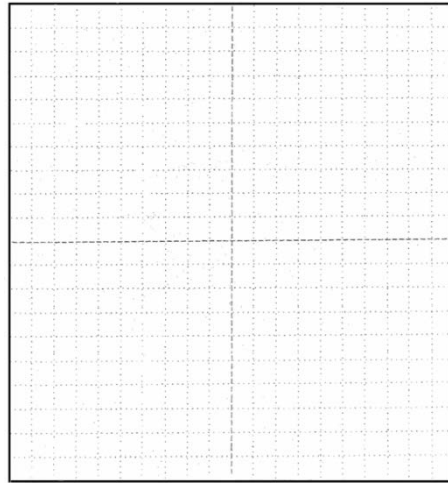
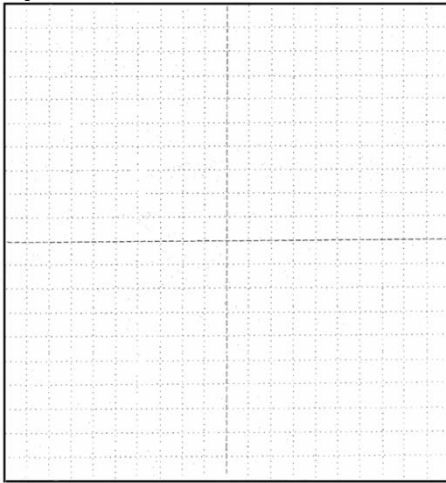
**Photographed :** Y \_\_\_\_\_ N \_\_\_\_\_

### Headstone Measurement (cm):

**Height** (max. vertical dimension of marker from surface) & **Width** (max. horizontal dimension of marker reading surface)

**Height** \_\_\_\_\_ X **Width** \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_  
(area in sq. cm).

### QUICK SKETCHES:

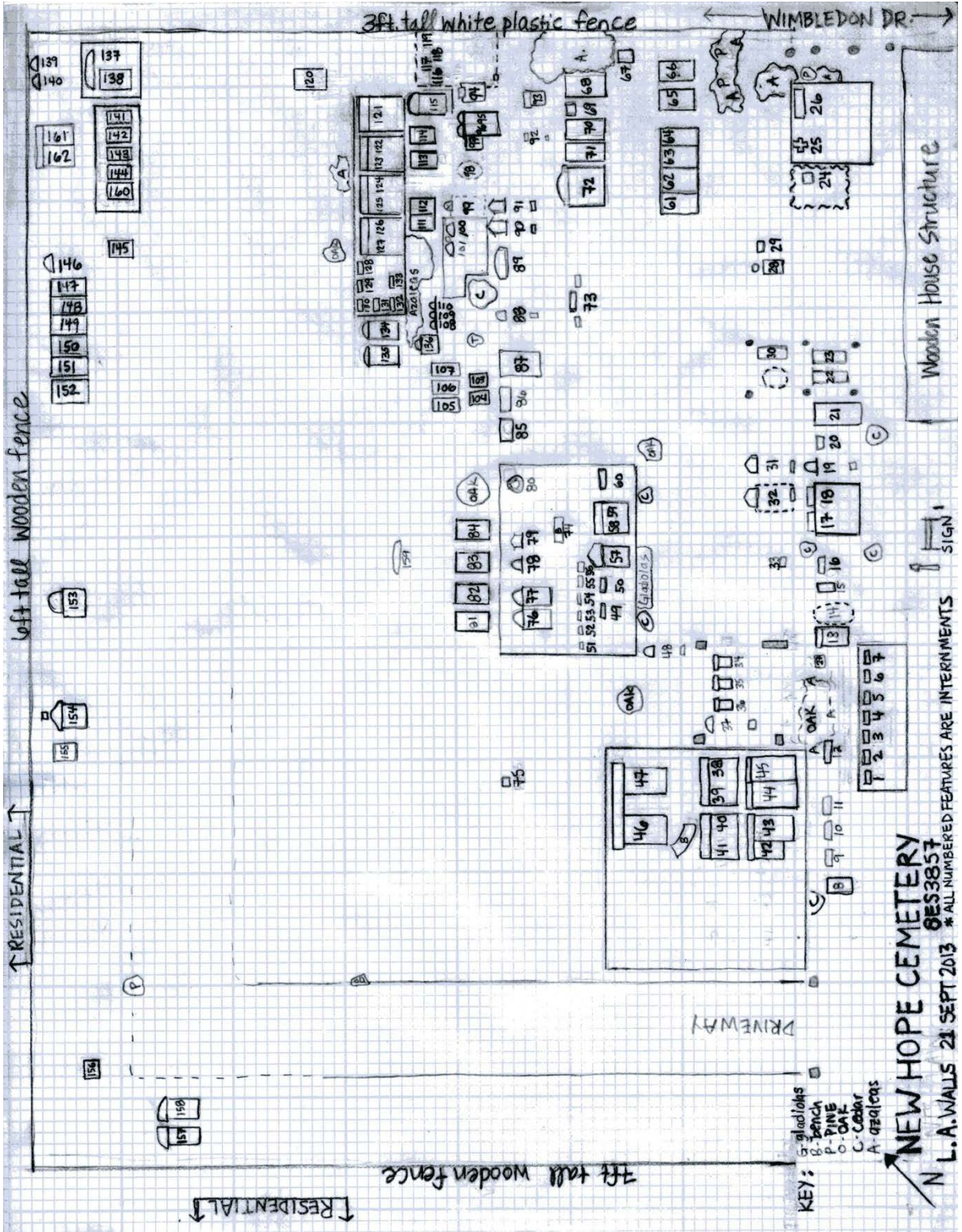


Attach additional sketch (to scale) and notes to this document if necessary.





# E. SAMPLE SKETCH MAP





## **F. LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE SCOPE OF WORK**

St. Michael's Cemetery Foundation of Pensacola, Inc.  
LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE SCOPE OF WORK  
Bid period: October 1- 24, 2012  
Contract period beginning November 1, 2012

### **Introduction**

St. Michael's Cemetery is an 8 acre historic site in downtown Pensacola. There are approximately 3200 marked burials as well as a large number of unmarked burials. The site is open to the public 365 days a year and is an outdoor museum chronicling Pensacola's rich and diverse history. The cemetery is on the National Register of Historic Places.

### **General Requirements**

All work will be performed in a professional and workmanlike manner by *experienced and well trained, uniformed* personnel, utilizing *clean, well-maintained equipment of the latest and most efficient design*.

The practices and procedures employed will be according to accepted industry standards (e.g., Association of Landscape Contractors of America). Service providers will possess technical expertise; all vehicles and equipment will be operated both skillfully and safely within the cemetery grounds.

Work performance will comply with the Federal Occupational Safety and Health Act.

Pesticides and herbicides will not be used on site by the Contractor or landscape staff unless approved in writing by the SMCF Grounds Committee after consultation with the SMCF Review Committee. Application of pesticides and herbicides will not be the responsibility of the Contractor as part of this contract.

All mechanized equipment (power mowers, trimmer, edger, etc.) must be turned off if crew encounters the public (within 20 feet).

The Contractor will train crew members to respect not only the solemn dignity of the cemetery, avoiding loud talking, running, etc., but will also train all employees concerning the provisions of this agreement and the need to prevent damage to tombs, stones, monuments, and fencing. A Contractor designated crew supervisor (English

speaking) will be on site at all times the general crew is working. Crew will not stand or sit on funerary features or otherwise impact features.

All work will be performed in a workmanship-like manner. No equipment or personal items will be placed on funerary features; all personal trash will be removed from the site. Smoking on site is not allowed. The landscape team will not use the SMC trash bin for work related disposal of debris or for personal trash (there is limited space).

Contractor and Supervisor will familiarize themselves with the Best Practices for Cemetery Lawn Maintenance ( [chicora.org/pdfs/lawn/maintenance](http://chicora.org/pdfs/lawn/maintenance)) so as to be familiar with historic cemetery maintenance practices and be able to carry them out in a practical manner.

## **Lawn Maintenance Issues**

### **Mowing**

Paper, trash, branches, artificial flowers not associated with grave and other debris will be collected prior to each mowing.

Contractor will mow turf areas [as needed according to seasonal growth] on the following schedule: twice a month April 1 through November 1 and once a month between November 1 and April 1.

No more than 1/3 of the leaf blades will be removed per mowing- Contractor will be expected to adjust the mowing height as appropriate.

All mowing will be conducted with a reel/rotary/mulching] mower. Under no circumstance will any equipment larger than an intermediate walk-behind mower (21- inch push mower) be used in the cemetery in areas of closely situated funerary features. A stand-behind riding mower may be used in road ways, open areas, and open walkways. NO MOVER EQUIPMENT WILL BE OPERATED OVER FLAT LEDGERS/VAULTS.

Mower blades will be sharp at all times to provide a quality cut and prevent tearing of grass blades.

Mowing equipment and patterns (alternate directions each cutting where possible) shall be employed to permit recycling of clippings where possible and present a neat appearance.

Contractor will leave clippings on the lawn as long as no readily visible clumps remain on the grass surface 36 hours after mowing. Otherwise, Contractor will distribute large clumps of clippings by mechanical blowing or by collecting and removing them.

All plots with coping surrounding grass will require special treatment and consideration.

No coping is to be damaged by turf maintenance or moved to make maintenance "easier". Mowers may not be operating when passing over coping.

Only 21-inch push mowers or string trimmers may be used in plots with coping.

### **Edging and Trimming**

Grass adjacent to fixed objects, such as tombs, grave stones, monuments, etc., shall be trimmed to the same height as the general turf. Trimming is to be done so that turf areas are not scalped.

Contractor will edge large public walkways every other mowing during the growing season (small walkways inside plots are not included).

No mower will be operated within 12 inches of any marker, monument, headstone, footstone, or other memorial. All turf between these markers and mown areas must be trimmed using a filament line trimmer equipped with a line no heavier than 0.08-inch.

The Contractor's employees will be expected to know the length of their trimmer line at all times to prevent this line from coming into contact with the grave stones, tombs, monuments, and fencing.

When trimming near stones, tombs, and monuments, the Contractor is responsible for ensuring that the rotation of the string causes the grass to be

thrown back towards the operator. This will assist in preventing any objects thrown by the trimmer, such as rocks, sticks, etc., from being thrown toward fragile stones, thereby minimizing the potential for accidental damage.

The cemetery's stones will be trimmed every other mowing during the growing season.

Mowers and line trimmers are not to come into contact with trees, established bushes, or damage ornamental plants. Broken trimmer string is not to be left on the ground.

Contractor will clean all clippings from sidewalks, curbs, roadways and markers and monuments immediately after mowing/and or edging. Contractor will not sweep, blow or otherwise dispose of clippings in sewer drains. Small plant/tree debris such as fallen palm fronds or small branches will be collected and hauled off and disposed of by contractor.

Under no circumstance will herbicides be used in lieu of appropriate edging and trimming, especially adjacent to monuments and fences. Soil sterilants may never be used on the cemetery property.

### **Pest Control**

Pest control is not the responsibility of the Landscape contractor.

The Contractor will alert the Grounds chairman if there is a pest problem needing to be addressed.

### **Pruning**

Contractor will remove fallen palm fronds and other small/light tree debris. Contractor will trim low hanging dead palm fronds from palm trees once a year in advance of April 1 cycle.

All optional services will be by supplemental written agreement of SMCF Grounds Committee and that agreement will specify the extent and cost of the proposed work.

### **Inspection and Acceptance of Work**

The Contractor will establish a regular work schedule and notify the Grounds Chair of days/times of service (inclement weather taken into consideration).

### **Insurance, Licenses, Permits, and Liability**

The Contractor will carry liability amounts and worker's compensation coverage required by law on his/her operators and employees and require the same of any subcontractors and provide proof of same to the SMCF.

The Contractor will carry general liability insurance in the amount of \$1,000,000.

The Contractor is also responsible for obtaining any licenses and/or permits (not limited to business licenses, etc.) required by law for activities on cemetery property.

### **Preservation responsibilities**

The Contractor is responsible for training workers in a manner that will result in the least possible amount of damage to the site in the performance of maintenance duties. While it is impossible to avoid all negative impact, if large scale damage to a feature is the result of improper adherence of maintenance practices, the Foundation will hold the Contractor responsible for the cost of repairs ( by a masonry/fence specialist working with the Foundation). No repairs what so ever will be undertaken by the Contractor or crew. The Contractor will notify the Grounds Chair immediately if damage has occurred.

### **Terms and Conditions**

This contract is for the maintenance of property at 6 North Alcaniz (St. Michael's Cemetery). The contract term is for a period of 1-year with a beginning date of \_\_\_\_\_ and ending date of \_\_\_\_\_. The contract will be reviewed by the SMCF and the Contractor one month prior to the end date. The contract may be canceled by either party without cause with 30 days of written notification. The contractor will furnish all labor and equipment for the performance of this contract. Agreed upon contract service will be paid monthly. Any additional or unscheduled services agreed upon by the cemetery and the Contractor will be billed separately as net 30 days.

*Note: Contract language adapted from Chicora Foundation*





## G. CONSERVATION FORM

### CEMETERY CONSERVATION FORM

Master Site File # **8ES**\_\_\_\_\_

**Marker Name** LAST\_\_\_\_\_FIRST\_\_\_\_\_MI\_\_\_\_\_

Date of feature construction (**Death year**)\_\_\_\_\_

#### **Feature type**

Headstone    Footstone    Above-ground tomb

Ledger        Box-tomb        Obelisk        Pedestal-tomb        Mausoleum

Vernacular marker    Woodsman of the World    Other (specify)

#### **Marker Material**

Marble        granite        metal        concrete        brick        other (specify)

#### **Condition**

broken        fallen        chipped        tilted        cracked

stained        biological growth

**Previous Repair Work Evident? Yes / No**        Date of work (if known)\_\_\_\_\_

#### **Treatment: Cleaning**

D/2        Water        Other (specify)\_\_\_\_\_

#### **Other Treatments:**

**Photograph Before:** Yes/No

**Photograph After:** Yes/No

#### **Notes:**

Recorder(s)\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_\_



H. SAMPLE CONSERVATION TREATMENT FORM

TREATMENT REPORT

2A

Inspection Date: 3/2/2015

Inspected By: IS & MJ

MONUMENT CONSERVATION COLLABORATIVE LLC  
PO Box 541, Norfolk, CT 06058 860 307 6695 MCCLLC@gmail.com

Cemetery: St. Michael's Cemetery, Pensacola, FL

NAME ON MARKER Oswald Bonifay

Death Date: Marker Type: Headstone in base

Condition of Inscription: Legible Material: Marble

EXISTING CONDITIONS	CONSERVATION STRATEGY
Fractured	Attach elements with structural adhesive

TREATMENT	Date(s) of treatment
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All mating edges cleaned with water</li> <li>Fragments attached with structural adhesive (Abatron 55-22), clamped and braced until cured. Excess epoxy removed with hand chisels within 24 hours.</li> <li>Cracks and losses filled with RepliCal Marble products .</li> <li>Filled areas misted with water and covered for 3 days minimum</li> </ol>	3/2-3/6/2015



Comments:

All information given and recommendations made herein are based upon our research and are believed to be accurate, but no guarantee, either expressed or implied, is made with respect thereto. © MONUMENT CONSERVATION COLLABORATIVE LLC

