



**A Resource Guide to . . .**

# **Historic Cemeteries in Anne Arundel County, Maryland**



*Above: A tombstone in the Quaker Burying Ground*

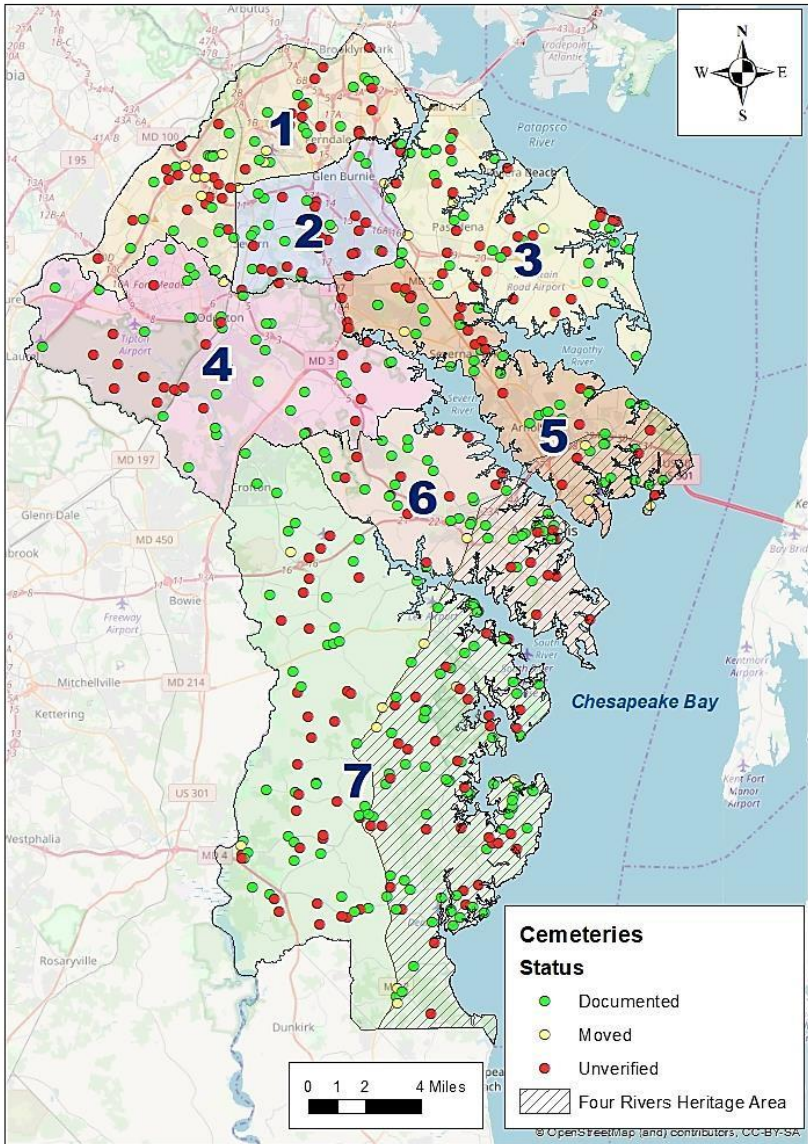
*Front cover: All Hallows Chapel*

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## Anne Arundel County Council Districts



*Hundreds of cemeteries are found throughout the County.*

# Historic Cemeteries: An Important Cultural Resource

Did you know there are over 500 recorded historic cemeteries in Anne Arundel County, Maryland, some dating as far back as the 1600s? Perhaps you have one on your property, or have seen one in your neighborhood- and wondered. Many are unmarked, remembered only through local lore, while others hide in dense overgrowth, awaiting rediscovery. This guidebook provides a range of resources to help identify, study, preserve and protect your local historic cemeteries.

Anne Arundel County is home to many different kinds of burial grounds, such as church graveyards of different faiths, institutional cemeteries, family cemeteries, and pre-Civil War burials of enslaved people. Some are lovingly cared for, with clear boundaries and grave markers, while others are abandoned or forgotten, only known from oral history, archaeology, remote sensing, or archival references. They represent an important cultural resource in the County, and the information they hold can lend new insights to our understanding of local history.

An unknown number of forgotten and unmarked cemeteries have been lost to natural forces or destroyed by development. Local organizations such as the Cemetery Committee of the Anne Arundel Genealogical Society and the Cultural Resources Division of Anne Arundel County's Office of Planning and Zoning work to document and preserve these important landmarks of the past, so that no more cemeteries are lost. These organizations rely on citizens to report that these cemeteries exist or are endangered. We hope you will join us in our efforts to save, protect and remember these important historic sites.



The above gravestone for Anne Birkhead, located at St. James Episcopal Parish in Lothian, is dated 1665. The inscription begins with ***“This Register is for her bones, Her fame is more perpetual than ye stones...”*** It is one of the oldest inscribed tombstones in Maryland.



The graveyard at All Hallows Brick Church, (est. before 1669) flanks a church built ca. 1730. Located near the colonial seaport of London Town on the South River, the earliest marked grave (for Samuel Peele, a merchant of London Town) dates to 1733. Church records indicate that there are even earlier unmarked graves in the churchyard.



The Quaker Burying Ground is on the site of the old Quaker Meetinghouse, established in 1672. Early Quakers avoided symbols of vanity in both life and death and they often did not mark their graves, so there are undoubtedly many internments older than its earliest tombstones. The names on marked graves provide a virtual “Who’s Who” of West River and Galesville history and society over centuries. Captain James Dooley (d. 1829), a privateer who operated in the Chesapeake theatre during the War of 1812 is buried here. Dooley was also a local landowner, and half-brother of George Gale, namesake of Galesville.

Cemeteries in Anne Arundel County are important historic resources, capable of shedding new light on the broad patterns of local development and they can yield insights into the families that settled here and their genealogical connections. Gravestones and monuments are works of art and even provide poetry carved in stone. They are remarkable testaments to history, they honor our forebears, and encourage reflection and appreciation for those who came before us. These cemeteries represent our County’s history and deserve to be identified, protected and studied. Read on to learn more about how you can help preserve these historic landmarks.

## Tools for Revealing Buried Secrets

Graveyards are important places of remembrance for the living, tying us in an intimate way to our past and to each other. The last place of repose is also an important historic record with clues that can reveal unknown connections and stories. To uncover these secrets, cemetery researchers rely upon many disciplines including genealogy, archaeology, remote sensing, art history, horticulture, materials conservation, and DNA studies; tools that help connect cemeteries to a local community's past and present, sometimes in ways we never expected.

A historic cemetery is often the last surviving vestige of a family farmstead or plantation. The farmhouse gone and barns demolished, when one sees a cemetery sitting in the middle of a modern subdivision, it can help remind new residents of those who once lived here, and worked the land.

Inscribed tombstones are sometimes the only written record about a life and the hardships endured. Sarah T. Kunsmen (marker shown here) tells us of an untimely death at only 22 years old, and makes note of her loss of an infant son just two months before her own death. Genealogists rely upon the names, relationships and dates revealed by markers to develop family histories, or to reconcile newspaper obituaries, marriage certificates, and death records. For a genealogist, a cemetery is a tangible record of the past, akin to a birth or death certificate, and provides clues that are vital to making connections.





The relative placement or clustering of gravestones within a plot can illuminate familial or personal relationships, which can open up an entire new avenue of historic or genealogical research.

Beyond the basic information often inscribed on gravestones, such as name, spouse, date of birth or death, the symbols on a gravestone can yield other valuable pieces of information, such as religious affiliation, social class, occupation or hobbies, along with other aspects of the deceased physical, spiritual, and material life. The poem carved onto George Gale's obelisk in the Quaker Burying Ground shown here reads,



*“Afflictions sore for years I bore  
Physicians were in vain  
At length God pleased to give me death  
And freed me from my pain.”*

Historians studying settlement patterns and land use or archaeologists searching for new sites often find the location of a historic cemetery to be a significant clue to understanding a historic or cultural landscape and its evolution over time. Family cemeteries were often within sight of historic dwellings.

Churches and their graveyards were the physical and spiritual center of a community, or located near historic settlements, or byways, either by water or road. The size of a graveyard, the number of burials and its period of use also give a sense of the historic population of an area.

Stylistic differences preserved in the carvings and decorations on gravestones reveal how craftsmanship, construction, and local folk art evolved over time. Common motifs include angels of death, doves, maple leaves, flowers and broken columns. Cast iron work fences and other cemetery furnishings, such as benches, also speak to the stylistic trends of the past. These are also representative of the work and artistry of individual craftspeople.

Iconography is fraught with symbolism that represents society's changing views regarding death - from Puritan cross-bones evoking death's grim reality to sentimental nineteenth century carvings of weeping willows, like the one shown here, representing the grief of those left behind. Studying cemeteries from these artistic and social perspectives lends new insights into mortuary practices and grave-keeping, but also gives us a glimpse of the perspectives and even the world-view of those who were left behind to memorialize their loved ones in stone.



*Skull and Cross-Bones (top) and Weeping Willow (bottom) Iconography*

Unmarked African American cemeteries across the County, especially those of enslaved peoples from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, are far too often forgotten, and they are inherently difficult to document and locate, yet they are historically significant. They hold vast historical and archaeological potential.



*Whitehall Cemetery: An unmarked burial ground of enslaved peoples.*

Scholars have demonstrated how studying the material culture of burials, like the presence of grave goods, coffin construction and hardware, or burial clothing or shrouds has the potential to enhance our knowledge of an under-represented aspect of the County's cultural heritage.

Remote sensing methods like ground penetrating radar enable archaeologists to identify burial sites and cemetery extents without causing disturbance. Excavation is rarely undertaken, either as an emergency response when a burial is threatened, or at the behest of a descendant community. More intrusive forensic studies can reveal the challenges our ancestors faced, such as childhood diseases, childbirth, epidemics, war, and a lack of antibiotics. DNA analysis can connect modern populations with their descendants. This last type of study is particularly important for recovering and empowering the descendant populations of those enslaved peoples.



*A Ground Penetrating Radar survey underway at Whitehall Cemetery.*

## Why are historic cemeteries disappearing?

Despite a framework of legal protections, and communities that care deeply about these sites, historic cemeteries in Anne Arundel County are under threat, in some cases from development, but most commonly, they are lost to natural forces, neglect, and simple abandonment. Citizen involvement is sorely needed to counter these perils.

### Development

Development, grading, and construction can quickly decimate a cemetery, leaving nothing but rubble and destroying the information it once held. While development rules that have been put in place over the past two decades ensure that legal permitted development will not impact burial grounds, rules can only be enforced if a cemetery's existence is known and recorded in the County's spatial database. Unless it is recorded, it won't be flagged for protection during the development review process. Many "forgotten" or unmarked cemeteries are in danger and unprotected. Without citizen reporting or cemetery boundaries noted in the land records, these cemeteries remain endangered. Even cemetery locations recorded as "moved" in the State records surprisingly may still have remains, as too often the burial removal was haphazard and incomplete.



*The aftermath of unpermitted grading in the Daker-Dicus-Thornton Cemetery near Pasadena.*

## Natural Forces

Anne Arundel County's 525 miles of shoreline is experiencing increasing threats from frequent flooding, powerful storms, coastal erosion, and sea level rise. Water is an indomitable force that has endangered and destroyed hundreds of historic sites--including cemeteries. In some cases, archaeologists are called in to conduct salvage excavation and recover scientific data, and if feasible relocate burials to a safer place. Two recent and extreme examples described below demonstrate the storm- and flood-water drainage problems in a number of our historic cemeteries.



In 2012, mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century iron caskets from the Weedon Family Cemetery eroded out of the shoreline in St Margaret's and were lying on the beach and submerged in a few feet of water (see above). Archaeologists assisted in documenting the ornate caskets, rescuing the remains and reburying them upland, in a safer location, near the bounds of the original graveyard (right). It is unclear how long until they are threatened again as erosion continues to eat away at that shoreline today.



In 2015, the historic African American cemetery at Asbury Broadneck United Methodist Church in Arnold was experiencing tremendous flooding from rainwater runoff. This was causing damage to some of the hundreds of graves at this centuries-old site, even causing the disinterment of one casket. The congregation rallied, and with a substantial grant from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, they are conducting a stream stabilization and water quality improvement project in order to protect the cemetery. This project also required archaeological excavation to assist in moving the most endangered gravesites.

### **Neglect & Abandonment**

One of the greatest threats to the preservation of a historic cemetery is neglect and abandonment. Families move, or land is sold, and the old family cemetery is forgotten. In some cases, access is limited, or there are no family members to upkeep and maintain the site.

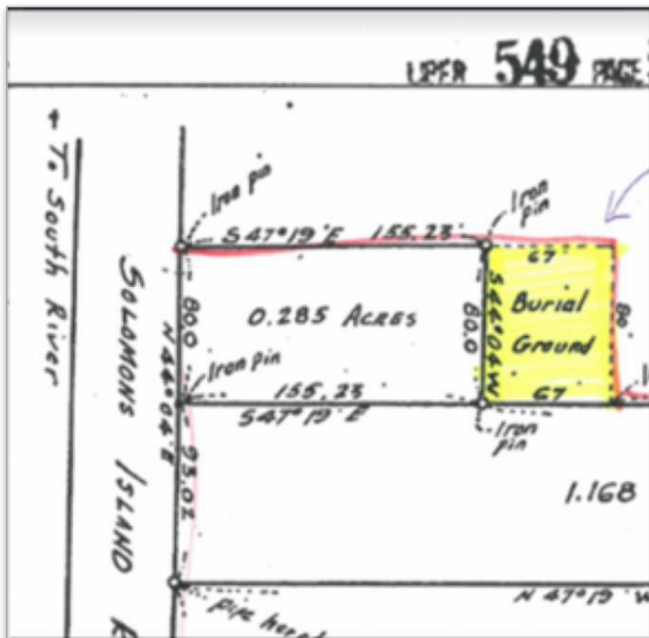
Without a caretaker, vandalism and desecration ensues. Once regal fencing rusts and collapses to the ground, vegetation grows up and over consuming any visible signs of the graveyard, markers sink and fall over, leaves cover the site, gravestones are vandalized or stolen, and as visibility decreases, the cemetery is soon lost to time.



## Preservation and Conservation: Protecting Historic Cemeteries

Anne Arundel County is one of only six local jurisdictions in Maryland with an ordinance that protects historic cemeteries. (Anne Arundel County Code, Article 17-6-503). The County's Cultural Resources Division in the Office of Planning & Zoning (CRD) is responsible for ensuring that these important places are protected and are preserved in place. CRD maintains an extensive archive of cemetery site information, digital maps, and a database of both known and reported cemetery locations.

When development is proposed, the County Code requires that the developer identify and delineate cemetery boundaries using commonly accepted methods like archival or deed research, archaeology or geophysical survey, field observations, or information provided by local informants. On rare occasions, old land records clearly delineate the burial ground as is shown in this plat (below).



Once the boundaries of the cemetery are established, grading, construction, or subsurface disturbance within 25 feet of the cemetery is prohibited, a 15-foot right of way is required for descendant access, and the developer is required to place the cemetery under a legally-binding preservation easement that identifies who is responsible for maintaining and protecting the cemetery. This process also ensures that the cemetery is recorded in the Anne Arundel County Land Records for posterity and public knowledge.

The County easement only requires the property owner to maintain a cemetery *as-is* and to ensure that it is not disturbed; however, the easement does not require the property owner to undertake proactive steps like materials conservation to support the preservation of the historic materials of the property.

Easement holders and cemetery stewards are encouraged however to retain historic material and vegetation within the cemetery. Basic maintenance will prevent the site from becoming overgrown. Unfortunately, for many historic cemeteries that have no living descendants, current property owners may feel burdened with the responsibility, thus many do not invest in the upkeep of these cemeteries.



*Although tombstones have been looted from this neglected, overgrown cemetery, burial depressions are still evident.*



Maryland State law provides basic protection against disturbance of burial sites and human remains and provides a basis for access by interested parties. Should human remains be discovered accidentally, the law requires notification of the County's State Attorney. Maryland prohibits the desecration of a cemetery, counting it as a misdemeanor with imprisonment from 2 to 5 years or a fine of \$500- \$10,000 or both, plus cost of restoration (COMAR Title 10, Sub. 4, Sec. 10-404). Once a negligent or destructive person is identified, the threat of State law can cause the damage to cease. Citizen stewards can report such acts to their local police, or to the County's Cultural Resources Division in the Office of Planning & Zoning (CRD).



*The Linthicum Family graveyard in Crofton, Maryland, with historic Linthicum Walks in the background. Recently, the grave marker of Thomas Linthicum was stolen from the site; a culprit was never identified.*

The State's Historic Preservation Office, (the Maryland Historical Trust,) can provide technical advice on cemetery preservation matters, though they do not maintain a listing of stand-alone cemeteries, unless they are related to an historic structure or documented archaeological site.

Maryland also has an Office of Cemetery Oversight within the State Office of Mental Health and Hygiene (COMAR Title 5, and COMAR Title 9). This Office does not regulate abandoned,

private, or non-operational cemeteries, so many of its functions do not pertain to historic cemeteries; however, the Office can play an advisory role to the citizen.

While Anne Arundel County has in place certain protections, our regulatory toolbox and staffing capacity is limited. The preservation of historic cemeteries requires citizen stewardship, either from individual property owners, from the community, from descendants, or from affinity groups.

There are, at current count, 35 “orphan cemeteries” in the County-- those located on parcels without an identifiable owner in SDAT, or with known descendants in the area. These are some of the most vulnerable, increasingly endangered by neglect or from unwitting neighbors commandeering the property as their own, often causing irreparable damage. At the moment, there is no mechanism in State or County laws to designate someone responsible for the care of these orphan cemeteries.

This call for citizen engagement and volunteer stewardship is founded in the reality that when it comes to conservation and restoration, there are limited funding sources to support preservation initiatives. Community partnerships between local societies, improvement associations, individual property owners, and businesses are essential to ensure the upkeep and preservation of these historic places.



*Overgrowth in the Hammond Family Cemetery in Gambrills before volunteers of the Anne Arundel Genealogical Society cleaned it up.*

## How to Find Out if There is a Historic Cemetery Nearby or On Your Property

The County's Cultural Resources Division (CRD) has recorded the location of every documented, moved, and reported/unverified cemetery into the County Inventory of Historic Properties. That database is built off of the inventory begun by the Cemetery Committee of the Anne Arundel Genealogical Society (AAGS). CRD maintains a close working relationship with AAGS to maintain and update the cemetery database, which grows steadily.

The County's repository of cemetery data is in a Geographic Information System, a management tool that enables review of potential impacts from development before they happen, as well as analysis of the highest potential locations for those "unverified" cemeteries.

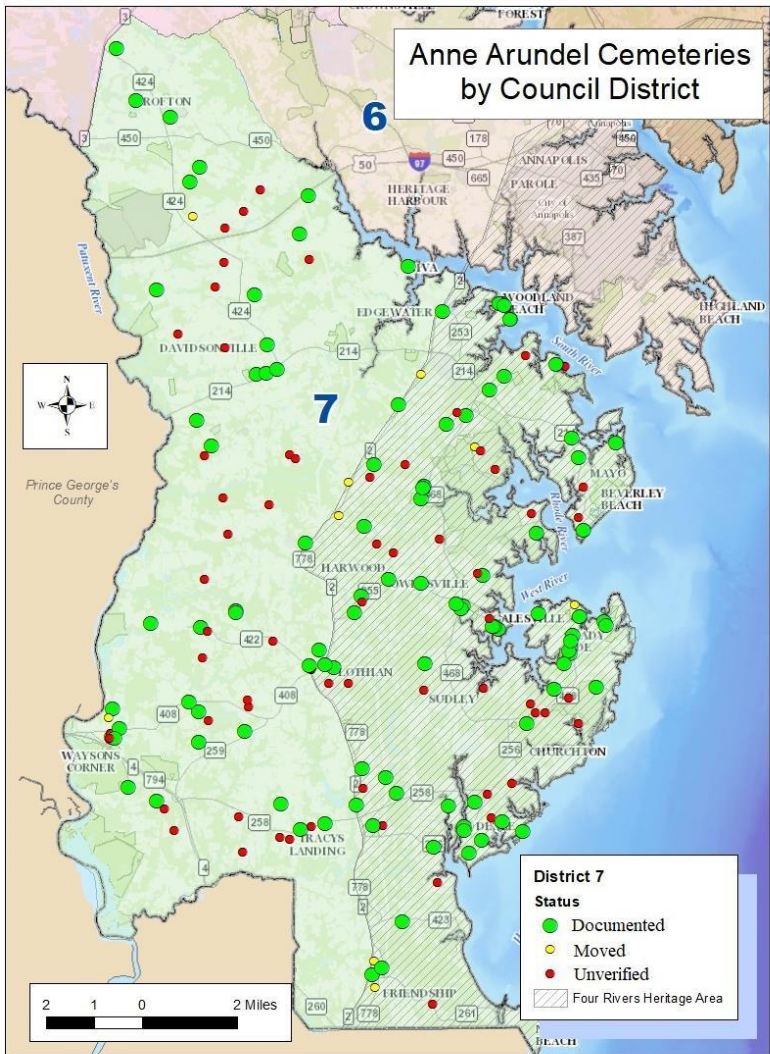
Of more than 500 cemeteries, about 300 are confirmed with firm locations, while more than 200 are reported, mentioned in deeds, shown on old maps, or even rumored to be in general locations, but are not yet verified in the field.

Citizens can view this data in the County's interactive map portal, "Geocortex" which is available to the public in the County's Map Information Center on the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor of 2664 Riva Rd, Annapolis, MD. The Cultural Resources Division also has a historic properties search tool on their webpage, where citizens can search by address or tax account number to see if their property contains a cemetery. *(Note – this database is routinely updated, constantly growing, and is not comprehensive).*

### **HISTORIC PROPERTIES SEARCH TOOL**

[www.aacounty.org/HistoricPropertiesSearch](http://www.aacounty.org/HistoricPropertiesSearch)

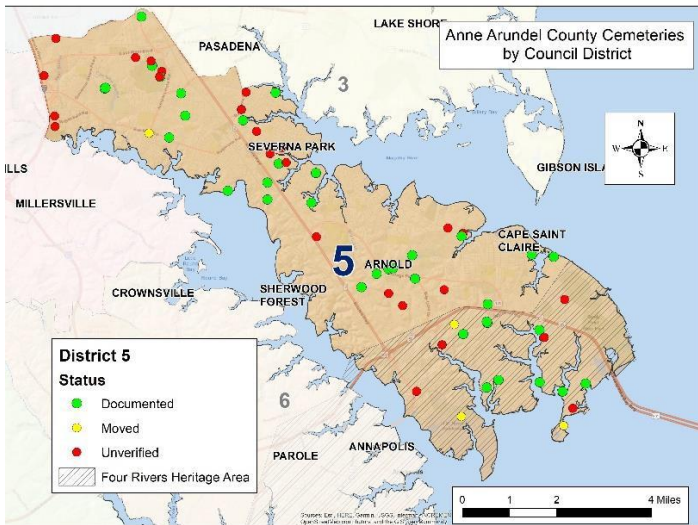
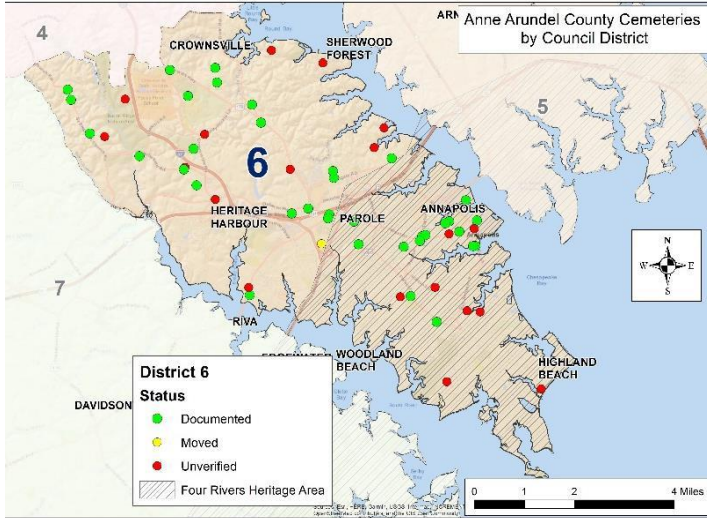
# County Council District 7 (including the Four Rivers Heritage Area)



This district, which encompasses the majority of the Four Rivers Heritage Area, is home to 174 known cemeteries, 100 of which have confirmed or mapped locations.

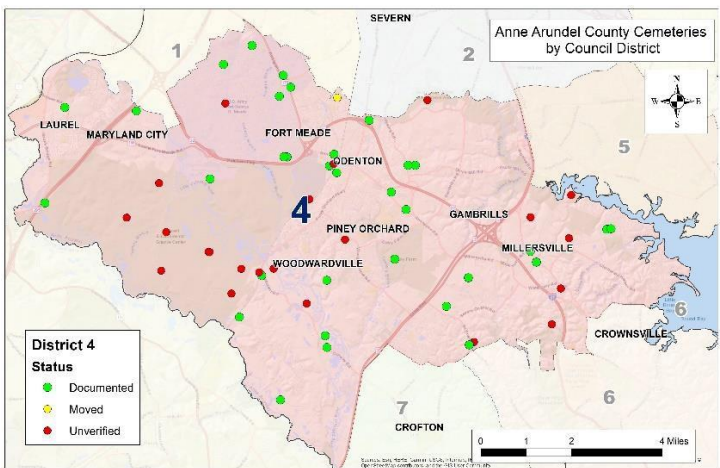
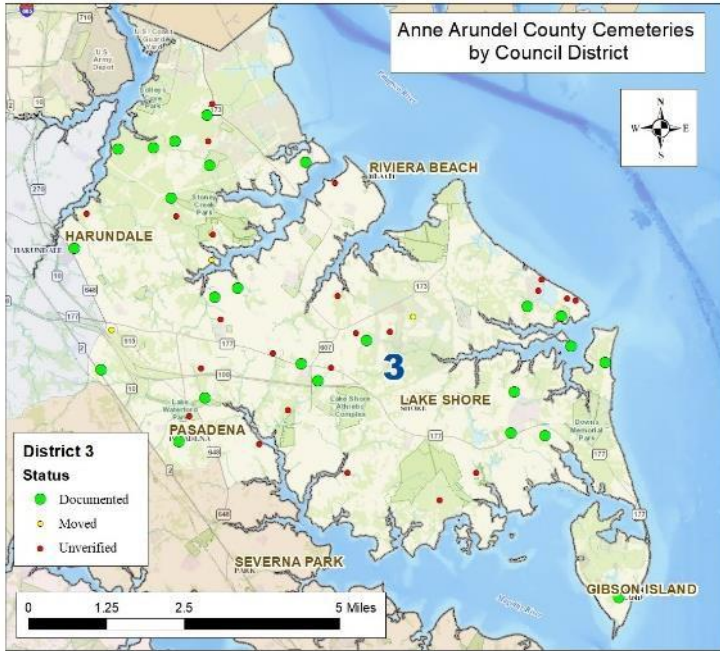
## County Council Districts 5 & 6 (including the Four Rivers Heritage Area)

These two districts, which include the City of Annapolis and also the Broadneck Peninsula, contain 120 cemeteries, 71 of which have known locations.



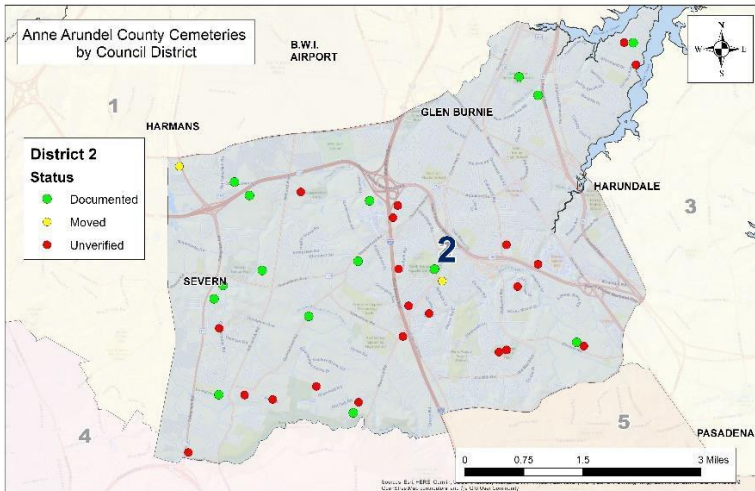
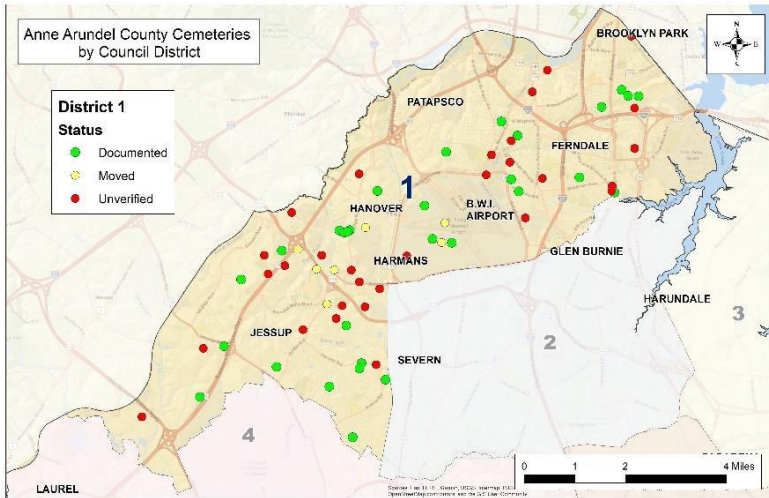
## County Council Districts 3 & 4

The districts that are home to Pasadena and Fort Meade contain 107 identified cemeteries with 58 that have known locations.



## County Council Districts 1 & 2

The two northernmost districts of the County, home to BWI and to Glen Burnie, contain 105 cemeteries, 45 of which have known locations.



## Become a Cemetery Steward for Anne Arundel County

We need your help to preserve and protect the County's historic cemeteries. Go to [www.aacounty.org/cemeteries](http://www.aacounty.org/cemeteries) to find our interactive *Cemetery Survey Tool*, and you can help us locate cemeteries, report on their conditions and preservation needs, and provide critical data needed to protect them. You can also download a paper copy of the Survey Data Collection Form, if you would prefer recording the information by hand, or if the cemetery you are surveying lacks cell service!

You will be collecting the following types of information and putting it into the *Cemetery Survey Tool*:

- **Where is it?** This can be a street address, a parcel or lot number, Lat/Longs, or even detailed landmarks to help map, relocate or confirm the location.
- **How big is it?** Boundaries can be obvious, like a fence, but may be more nuanced. Look for changes in vegetation, large trees, and variations in ground cover or micro-topography. Basing the bounds on the presence of only surviving stones is not always the best indicator.
- **What is its general condition?** Knowing if the cemetery is well-kept or overgrown, and documenting the condition of tombstones (in good order, covered in lichen, tipped over, or perhaps even missing!) helps preservation planning efforts and prioritizes action.
- **Can you make a map?** Even crude hand drawn site plans of cemetery plots with notation on marker placement, pathways, and vegetation, along with transcriptions of inscriptions and photographs of individual stones and their setting are vital records that a citizen can provide with very little cost by spending a day documenting a cemetery. Grave markers, benches, historic trees, exotic plants, ornamentals, and pathways all give structure to a cemetery's historic character.



- **Who's Buried There?** Write down as much genealogical information as possible. Their names, familial relationships and dates of birth and death, along with recording details, such as iconography, shape and form, carvings or poems are helpful.
- **What else do you know?** Other useful clues might include contacts of local informants or descendants to help track down leads. Perhaps someone has an old plat that shows a cemetery, or even shares a memory of a loved one.
- **What do you think needs to be done?** You have come this far and have seen it firsthand. If the cemetery in dire shape, or imminently endangered, we hope to use this tool and a growing corps of Cemetery Stewards to take action!
- **Finally~ Photos. Photos. Photos!** In this age of digital photography, more is better, (as long as they are in focus). Show tombstones up close, but also in context. Provide wide shots of the whole cemetery, so each stone can be understood as part of a whole landscape.

The Cultural Resources Division counts on its cemetery preservation stewards to help in documenting these cemeteries. It is a task that cannot be accomplished without community engagement, support, and involvement. The goal of preservation is to retain the historic fabric of these places, and to preserve their sense of place. Citizens can provide invaluable support to helping preserve them, with relatively small effort, very little to no financial investment, and minimal training. You may even learn something about your local history along the way!

**Find the County's Cemetery Survey Tool at**

[www.aacounty.org/cemeteries](http://www.aacounty.org/cemeteries)

## Resource Guide: Where to Learn More

### GOVERNMENT (Cemetery Oversight, Laws, Regulations)

Anne Arundel County Cultural Resources Division  
(Ms Anastasia Poulos, [pzpoul44@aacounty.org](mailto:pzpoul44@aacounty.org))  
[www.aacounty.org/cemeteries](http://www.aacounty.org/cemeteries)

Office of the State's Attorney, Anne Arundel County, MD  
[www.aacounty.org/departments/sao](http://www.aacounty.org/departments/sao)

Maryland Historical Trust  
[mht.maryland.gov/research\\_cemeteries.shtml](http://mht.maryland.gov/research_cemeteries.shtml)

Maryland Office of Cemetery Oversight - *Frequently Asked Questions: Abandoned, Private, and Family Cemeteries*  
[www.dllr.state.md.us/license/cem/cemgenlfaq.shtml#abandoned](http://www.dllr.state.md.us/license/cem/cemgenlfaq.shtml#abandoned)

### NON-PROFITS (Community Partners, Grantors)

Anne Arundel Genealogical Society – Cemetery Records  
[www.aagensoc.org/cemeteryRecords.php](http://www.aagensoc.org/cemeteryRecords.php)

Anne Arundel County Trust for Preservation  
[www.annearundeltrust.org/](http://www.annearundeltrust.org/)

Coalition to Protect Maryland Burial Sites – Guide to Burial Site Stewardship  
[www.cpmbs.org/coalition-guide/](http://www.cpmbs.org/coalition-guide/)

Trader Foundation for Maryland Burial Sites  
[www.cpmbs.org/trader-foundation/](http://www.cpmbs.org/trader-foundation/)

Four Rivers Heritage Area  
[www.fourriversheritage.org/](http://www.fourriversheritage.org/)

Preservation Maryland  
[www.preservationmaryland.org/](http://www.preservationmaryland.org/)

## LOCAL CEMETERY RESOURCES

Maryland State Archives, Tombstone & Cemetery Records  
[www.guide.msa.maryland.gov/pages/viewer.aspx?page=graves](http://www.guide.msa.maryland.gov/pages/viewer.aspx?page=graves)

### Anne Arundel Genealogical Society:

*Anne Arundel County Cemetery Sites*, by Christine N. Simmons, 2002.

*Grave Matters: African-American and Slave Cemeteries of Anne Arundel County, MD*, by C. Simmons and T. L. Harding, 2004.

*Grave Matters: Cemetery Inscriptions, Anne Arundel County, Maryland, V. 1: Annapolis Junction, beyond the County border, BWI Airport, Fort George G. Meade, Hanover, Harmans, Jessup, Laurel, Severn*, by C. Simmons, 2019.

*Grave Matters: Cemetery Inscriptions, Anne Arundel County, Maryland, V. 2: Brooklyn, Curtis Bay, Glen Burnie, Linthicum, Millersville, Odenton*, by C. Simmons, 2019.

*Grave Matters: Cemetery Inscriptions, Anne Arundel County, Maryland, V. 3: Arnold, Crofton, Crownsville, Galesville, Pasadena, Severna Park*, by C. Simmons, 2019.

*Index of Anne Arundel County, Maryland, Death Certificates, 1840-1920*, by C. Simmons, 2016.

## CONSERVATION & PRESERVATION RESOURCES

Association for Gravestone Studies:

[www.gravestonestudies.org](http://www.gravestonestudies.org)

*Care and Cleaning of Gravestones, Saving Graves*

[www.savinggraves.net/care-and-cleaning-of-gravestones](http://www.savinggraves.net/care-and-cleaning-of-gravestones)

Chicora Foundation

[www.chicora.org/cemetery-preservation.html](http://www.chicora.org/cemetery-preservation.html)

*A Graveyard Preservation Primer*, by Lynette Strangstad, AltaMira Press, 2013.

*Landscapes of Memories: A Guide for Conserving Historic Cemeteries, Repairing Tombstones*, by T. Cartwright, Ontario Ministry, 1998.

[www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/cemeteries/Landscape%20of%20Memories.pdf](http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/cemeteries/Landscape%20of%20Memories.pdf)

*Michigan Historic Cemeteries Preservation Guide*, by Gregg G. King, Michigan State Historic Preservation Office.  
[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)

*National Register Bulletin: Guidelines for Evaluating and Registering Cemeteries and Burial Places*, by E. Potter and B. Boland, National Park Service, 1992.  
[www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb41/](http://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb41/)

*Prince George's County Cemetery Preservation Manual*, 2010  
[www.mncppcapps.org/planning/publications/BookDetail.cfm?item\\_id=232&Category\\_id=2](http://www.mncppcapps.org/planning/publications/BookDetail.cfm?item_id=232&Category_id=2)

*Preservation Brief 48: Preserving Grave Markers in Historic Cemeteries*, by M. Streigel, F. Gale, E. Church, & D. Dietrich-Smith, National Park Service,  
<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/preservedocs/preservation-briefs/48Preserve-Brief-GraveMarkers.pdf>

*The Secretary Interior Standards and Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Properties*  
[www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm](http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm)

## **OTHER FUN READS**

*In Small Things Forgotten: An Archaeology of Early American Life*. By James Deetz. Random House, New York 1996.

*Grave Exclamations: An Analysis of Tombstones and Their Use as Narrative of Self*. By Lacey Jae Ritter. Minnesota State University – Mankato 2012.

*Stories in Stone: A Field Guide to Cemetery Symbolism & Iconography*. By Douglas Keister. Gibbs Smith, Publishing, 2014.

## Conservation Tips from the Pros

- **Always check that a grave monument is stable before cleaning.** Many may look stable but are actually very unsteady and *very* heavy. If you are cleaning stones, it is recommended not to do it alone in case of accident.
- Always get a property owner's **permission** or a descendant's permission before proceeding with any treatment on individual stones.
- While rubbings can be useful, make sure that you are not causing inadvertent damage to the material. Digital photography is so advanced now, it can be just as effective—and leaves no 'trace.'
- **Generally, a tombstone only requires cleaning if the inscription is illegible.**
- **Water** with a soft bristle brush (never metal!) is the best cleaning treatment. It is better to under-clean gently than to over-clean. Gentle, non-ionic biocides like "wet and forget" should be used only in the event that fungus or vegetation is obscuring or damaging an inscription, significant iconography, or workmanship. *Never* use household cleaners or pressure washers which can damage a stone.
- Do not clean powdery, brittle, sugaring, or crumbling stone – such stones require immediate documentation and only professional conservation will preserve the stone.
- Do **document** as much of a cemetery as you can with maps, photographs, GPS coordinates, inscriptions, and by submitting a survey form to Anne Arundel County's Cultural Resources Division.

- Do not try to do everything yourself. Some things are best left to a professional conservator, otherwise the historic material may suffer irreparable damage. If a stone is broken or fallen, keep it on its back on the gravesite with any inscriptions face up – **do not remove a stone from its location on the site.**
- Do try to **maintain the existing vegetation** that was a part of the cemetery, i.e. bordering trees, exotic plants used as filler, ornamental flowers, etc.
- When using weed string trimmers and lawnmowers in a cemetery, leave a safety perimeter around the gravestones as these tools can cause irreparable damage to historic stones. Hand-clip vegetation around the stones sparingly, just enough to expose any inscriptions – bald patches around tombstones cause instability.

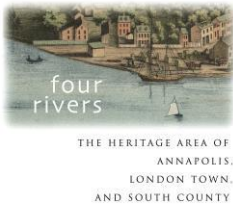


*Weeping Willow and Obelisk iconography on a stone from the Hancocks-Whittemore family cemetery in Orchard Beach, MD.*

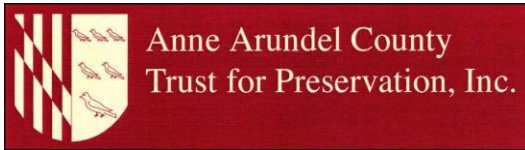
The following organizations have provided support in the research, development, and production of this Resource Guide:

- **Anne Arundel County, Planning & Zoning, Cultural Resources**
- **Anne Arundel County Trust for Preservation, Inc.**
- **Galesville Community Center, Inc.**
- **The Four Rivers Heritage Area**
- **Anne Arundel Genealogical Society**

Special and heartfelt thanks to Tina Simmons and the Cemetery Committee of the Anne Arundel Genealogical Society for their dedicated stewardship of historic cemeteries and their ongoing efforts to document these places of last repose.



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*This Resource Guide was financed by grants from the Four Rivers Heritage Area, the Anne Arundel County Trust for Preservation, Inc., and with State Funds from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority, an instrumentality of the State of Maryland. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority.*



***The tombstone of Ann Franklin (1782-1868) lies broken and on the ground in the Quaker Burying Ground, Galesville, MD.***

*This publication was designed and written by Anastasia Poulos, Archaeological Sites Planner, C. Jane Cox, Chief of the Cultural Resources Division in Anne Arundel County's Office of Planning and Zoning, and Gwen Manseau, Public History Consultant to the Anne Arundel County Trust for Preservation, Inc. Historic and modern photographs and maps were provided by Anne Arundel County's Cultural Resources Division.*

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