



North Carolina Citizen Cemetery Site Form Instructions

Notes on This Form

The North Carolina Citizen Cemetery Site Form is designed to allow non-professional members of the public to submit information relating to a wide variety of cemeteries across the state. Submission of this form to the NC Office of State Archaeology (OSA) is a vital step in the historic preservation process. This information will be stored confidentially at the state and accessed by researchers and contractors, descendant communities, local governments, and agencies seeking compliance with State and Federal preservation laws. In other words, recording a cemetery for OSA may help prevent it from being damaged or destroyed.

Once your cemetery is recorded with us it will be assigned a site number, a copy of which you will be provided for your records. If the cemetery has already been recorded, OSA will add your completed form to the cemetery's file and list the submission as a "revisit." Updates to listed cemeteries are welcomed because they are important tools for understanding how cemeteries change over time and help descendants and landowners develop responsible management plans.

Recording a cemetery on this form does not "list" it on the National Register of Historic Places or the North Carolina Historical Marker Program. For more information on listing resources on the historic registers, contact OSA's historic cemetery specialist.

Instructions and Tips

It may be difficult to fill out every blank on the Citizen Cemetery Site Form. Some information may have been lost over time or eroded away. That won't prevent a cemetery from being added to the NC Site File. Do the best you can to add what you know or have found to the form. If you have a great deal of information about the cemetery, feel free to use this form as a starting point. OSA asks that you fill in the basic information on the form itself, then attach any useful records, photos, documents, stories, maps, etc. to bolster our understanding of this special place.

Below are tips designed to help you understand key terms so that you can create the most accurate and useful submission possible. If you have additional questions, please see Melissa Timo's contact information below.

Coordinates:

- This is the most important addition to the cemetery form. OSA cannot add a cemetery to the NC Site File registry without an accurate location. If you do not have access to a GPS, you can also find coordinates via Google Earth or Maps, or smartphone apps like Solocator. Do not skip this step.

Cemetery name:

- Often times old cemetery have (or had) many names by which they were known. Please include all you know to benefit other descendants and researchers. If there is a most popular, most official, or preferred cemetery name, please make that the first on the list so that it can be added to the state database as such.

Map:

- A map may be a legible copy of a road or topographic map or a computer-generated map (like Google Maps). If available, OSA will also accept a GIS shapefile. Make sure the location of the cemetery is clearly legible. Include boundaries, if possible.

Plan View Map:

- A plan view map (also known as a bird's eye view map) may be a hand-drawn or computer-generated image showing an overhead view of the outline of the cemetery and placement of things within it, such as headstones, grave depressions, plants, enclosures, artifacts, interior paths, etc.

Marker Description Form:

- Please record epitaph information that you can clearly discern; do not presume words, names, or phrases. Leave spaces or underscores for letters or words that are illegible. Do not correct marker's spelling or punctuation. This will help with future genealogical searches.
- Examples of marker types include (but are not limited to) bench, cenotaph, chest tomb, cradle grave, crypt, field stone, headstone/tablet, mausoleum, monument, slap/capstone/ledger, table, temporary (funeral home), and more.
- You may duplicate the form or its rows as possible to have enough space for all the cemetery's markers.

Photography:

- Photographs are welcomed additions to your submission. Some photographs you might consider submitting are front and back of markers, depressions, cemetery architectural features, memorial plantings, artifact clusters, and damage. Don't forget to add shots that show whole cemetery overviews.
- To brighten or make inscriptions more legible without impacting the integrity of the marker, consider wetting the stone with water or using a flashlight, mirror, or photography reflector to cast raking light across the front of the marker at a 70-90-degree angle. Please do NOT use shaving foam, chalk, rubbings, etc. These will cause damage, leave residues, or perhaps topple unstable stones.
- When possible, include an object for scale such as a ruler, a quarter, a pencil, a Starbucks cup, etc.
- When possible, give photographs file names that describe the image, such as: JohnSmithMarkerFront.jpg, HarperMausoleum.jpg, OakwoodCemetery_FacingNorth.jpg

Other histories, narratives, or genealogies:

- OSA welcomes accompanying historical information about the cemeteries or those who are interred there. Please cite sources where you can so that future researchers know where to go or who to talk to for more information.

Ready to submit? Still need help?

Contact OSA! Please email or mail completed form, map and any photographic attachments to:

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