

MINUTES
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY
FALL 2013 ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING
NOVEMBER 19, 2013
ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY, ARLINGTON, VA

1. DESIGNATED FEDERAL OFFICER'S REMARKS. Ms. Renea Yates, Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for the Advisory Committee on Arlington National Cemetery (Committee) opened the Fall 2013 Organizational Meeting. Ms. Yates stated for the record that the Committee operates under authority of 5 US Code (U.S.C.) Appendix 2 and 41 Code of Federal Regulation 102-3.50(d), and is an Advisory Committee subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act.

a. Ms. Yates explained that Arlington National Cemetery (ANC), on behalf of the Department of the Army, is the sponsor of the Committee established by the Secretary of Defense (SecDef) in compliance with 10 U.S.C. § 4723 and the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2012. ANC, a Direct Reporting Unit to the Headquarters, Department of the Army, is the agency that receives the benefit of the Committee's advice and recommendations, as well as provides the DFO, who is nominated by the Executive Director and appointed by the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army. Additionally, ANC provides administrative support to the Committee.

b. Ms. Yates noted that the meeting was open to the public. She also reminded the public attending this open meeting and briefings that the public was not allowed to present questions from the floor or speak to any issue under discussion by the Committee without permission of the chair person. She noted that any member of the public was eligible to file a written statement with the Committee in accordance with the published Federal Register notice as posted in the binder at the entrance of the meeting room. Ms. Yates also noted that the proceedings were being recorded, and a summarized transcript of the meeting will be prepared.

2. CO-CHAIRS OPENING REMARKS. The Commission Co-Chair, HON Max Cleland, called the meeting to order at 0935 AM. HON Cleland took a moment for a personal reflection. He stated that this week may be the most historic week in 50 years at ANC. It is the Anniversary of the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy (JFK) and his subsequent burial in Arlington National Cemetery. HON Cleland reflected on his personal experience of where he was during this event culminating with a comment on the spirit of public service. He then allowed each committee member to reflect on their personal experience during the JFK assassination. HON Cleland concluded his opening remarks by addressing the agenda for the committee and then asked that Ms Yates take the floor.

3. MEMBERS, NEW AND FORMER. Ms. Yates introduced the new ADFO, SGM Brenda Curfman, and asked that all ANC personnel and guest please sign in,

Attendance Roster is attached at Tab A. Ms. Yates took roll call and stated the following as present:

HON Max Cleland;
Mr. Thomas Kelley;
Mr. Russell Davis;
Mr. Chet Edwards;
Mr. James Peake;
Mr. James V. Kimsey;
Mrs. Debra Fix

4. ADMINISTRATIVE REMARKS. Before taking roll, the DFO provided administrative announcements. The DFO reminded the Committee members and other federal officials present of their official oath of office. The SecArmy and SecDef established the “Advisory Committee on Arlington National Cemetery” pursuant to the NDAA of 2012, codified in 10 U.S. C. § 4723, and effective 1 August 2012.

The DFO noted that the SecDef approved the three subcommittees and existing focuses:

a. “Honor” Subcommittee: provide recommendations of methods to address the long-term future of ANC, including how best to extend the active burials and on what ANC should focus once all available space has been used.

b. “Remember” Subcommittee: provide recommendations on preserving the marble components of the Tomb of the Unknowns, including the cracks in the large marble memorial, the adjacent marble slabs, and the potential replacement of the marble stone for the memorial already gifted to the Army.

c. “Explore” Subcommittee: provide recommendations on the Section 60 Mementos study and improving the quality of visitors’ experiences, now and for generations to come.

The DFO noted the binders in front of each member are available to the public, which included the agenda, information and slides for the JFK 50th and ANC 150TH Anniversary events, Status of Expansion Projects, and Section 60 Mementos Pilot Program.

5. ROLL CALL. For the record, a quorum of the Committee was present. A list of attendees is appended to these minutes.

6. AGENDA INTRODUCTION AND REPORT REQUIREMENTS. Ms. Yates began the meeting by noting the three briefings the Committee would receive: one from Ms. Jennifer Lynch on the upcoming events for the 50th Anniversary of JFK and the 150th Anniversary of Arlington National Cemetery; one from Colonel Michelle Stewart on the status of expansion projects within Arlington National Cemetery, and one from Dr. Carney on the Section 60 Mementos Pilot Program.

a. HON Cleland then asked the DFO to provide an update on the Committee's report requirements. The DFO stated by the Committee's Charter that the Committee shall visit ANC at least once annually. Within 60 days after this annual visit, the Committee shall submit a written report of its actions, views and recommendations to the SecArmy. Pursuant to 10 U.S.C. § 4723, as codified with the NOAA of 2012, and not later than 90 days after receiving a report or recommendations from the Committee, the SecArmy shall submit the report or recommendations to the congressional defense committees and the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives and include such comments and recommendations of the SecArmy as he considers appropriate.

b. The DFO added that any report of a visit, other than the annual visit, shall be submitted to the SecArmy within 60 days after the Committee's visit.

7. JFK 50TH AND ANC 150TH EVENTS. Ms. Jennifer Lynch introduced herself and discussed the upcoming planned events for the JFK 50th Anniversary as well as the ANC 150th Anniversary.

a. Ms. Lynch described the pictorial selection already displayed in the Amphitheater as a tribute to JFK and that on Nov 22nd the media will have a live feed from the JFK gravesite for news networks which will allow people to log in from anywhere in the world and visit ANC virtually. ANCs goal is to meet the needs of the media without impacting the public visitation. On 25 Nov ANC will have the Irish Defence Forces 37th Cadet Class lay a wreath at the JFK site. She laid out the events for the 150th Anniversary by week stating that it would begin with a wreath laying ceremony at the first military burial site in the history of ANC. Ms. Lynch described the purpose and need for renaming the "Old Amphitheater" and the concept of how ANC intends to do this. She also informed the committee that ANC will be releasing an updated version of its APP which will provide the ability to organize a more detailed tour throughout ANC and the ability to share it on a social network. This updated version will be released on our website. She discussed the partnership with GOOGLE street view and what they accomplished for ANC and the benefits gained from their work which will be released as part of the 150th Anniversary observances.

b. Dr. Steve Carney talked about the Amphitheater Display Rooms new redesign. He described what it currently looks like with display cases and gifts that have no interpretation. He wants to ensure that all visitors have a context and understanding of the TUS and the Amphitheater. He showed an overview of the current room and discussed how the room currently is used to support visitors and all VIPs that come to lay wreaths. The new displays will articulate why Memorial Day and Decoration Day are important. He described how the new room will be laid out and discussed how ANC will memorialize the selection, and interment, of the unknowns at the TUS. He described the museum safe display cases and the preservation of gifts given to ANC. He demonstrated how the two free standing walls will look with one dedicated to MOH recipients and one illustrating the history of the TUS Guard and the meaning and significance of the ceremony. Dr. Carney described the vertical display panels and

how/what they will display stressing that ANC will not cause any structural damage to the building. Mr. Peake asked about the disposition of the items that are currently being displayed and Dr. Carney explained how ANC will rotate these gifts throughout the various display cabinets. HON Cleland ascertained if all items will be available for viewing and stressed that they should be.

8. STATUS OF EXPANSION PROJECTS. Updates were provided for Committee regarding the status of the land transfer and planning.

a. Mr. Justin Buller began with the former Navy Annex Site expansion update. He informed the committee that this project will add about 35 acres of additional burial ground to ANC. He relayed that he is currently negotiating with Arlington County for property exchanges that will ensure ANC has contiguous space. A realignment of county road "Columbia Pike" would deem all new land to ANC usable resulting in 40 acres of space (5 additional acres). He discussed the proposed interchange of Columbia Pike and the impact on the adjacent Air Force memorial. This exchange would benefit Arlington County by allowing them to run light rail which could service the Pentagon and ANC. HON Cleland stated there are a lot of positives outcomes in this course of action and Mr. Buller reinforced this statement by adding the possibility of museums as well as an interpretive center. Mr. Kelley asked the status of the negotiations with Arlington County of which Mr. Buller stated the land exchange would have to be approved by Congress. Mr. Davis discussed parking by the AF Memorial and the issue this could create and Mr. Buller stated that this is also a consideration in these negotiations.

b. Colonel Stewart introduced herself and began by stating that once the contract is awarded for the Navy Annex project ANC will need the committee's help to name it. Calling it the Navy Annex implies that only Navy personnel will be buried there. HON Cleland asked if other parts of ANC are named pointing out that this project would not need to be named but rather just consumed as ANC. He recommended calling it all ANC and if anything, have an interim name only. Colonel Stewart discussed the JFK eternal flame relighting and briefed that the project was complete. She explained the problems with the previous burner.

9. SECTION 60 MEMENTOS PILOT.- Ms. Yates opened up the discussion on Section 60 by stating that there were two basic issues to address. One is the disposition of the items collected from gravesites to date from Section 60 and the future implementation of the Section 60 Mementos Pilot Program; relaying that it was important for ANC to continue to assist families in memorializing their loved ones.

a. Ms. Yates laid out factual data of Section 60 beginning with when it opened for burials; how many veterans are buried there; how many are KIA from OIF/OEF as opposed to other conflicts. HON Cleland asked what a group burial is and if Section 60 was the main active burial area. Ms. Yates explained that it is one of several active areas and described the concept of a group burial. Dr. Carney elaborated on the items that have already been collected as well as the manner in which they were collected and tagged for future identification. He gave an overview of the Pilot program and what

the original intent of this program was. Mr. Carney addressed questions from Mr. Edwards in reference to the difference in policy for others buried in Section 60 and how it applied. Mr. Carney explained that ANC only collects from those sites that fall into the ANC collection criteria and at least one item has been collected off 800 of the eligible gravesites. Mr. Edwards asked for clarification on what was acceptable to be left at gravesites in Section 60. He then asked how many sections are in the cemetery and then pointed out that if he had a loved one in a section other than Section 60 he would not be allowed to leave items at their gravesite. Ms. Yates confirmed this. Mr. Edwards then asked what would happen to an item in Section 60 if placed on a Vietnam veteran's gravesite. Ms. Yates stated the policy applies to the section so it includes all graves. Mr. Kelley asked if we have had cases of the general public removing stuff from gravesites. Ms. Yates stated this occasionally happens but more commonly it is the weather; wind, rain, or snow, that causes things to move. HON Cleland restated to the committee that all sections are covered by the floral policy however there is one section, Section 60, which has an exception.

b. Mrs. Fix asked about "hand made objects" specifically how many and what type can be left at a gravesite. Mr. Peake asked who has become the custodian of all the collected items to which Mr. Carney stated that the items collected are stored at the Dir Logistics Warehouse on Ft. Belvoir because they are not sterile. Mr. Carney described the types of items they collect and the significance they must have in order to be collected. He stated that since Oct 2009 there has been a decline in the number of items that are being left. HON Cleland asked if there were any plans to display any of these items in the Visitor Center and Mr. Carney noted the desire was to make it a Memorial Collection similar to the Vietnam Wall collection. HON Cleland talked about the preservation of OIF/OEF letters similar to how Normandy had done in order for future generations to be able to read and understand this war. Mr. Edwards asked what would be the advantage of the committee recommending that these collected items be memorialized. Mr. Kelley asked if we have offered to the families to come collect their left items. Dr. Carney responded the items are kept locally for a term in the event a family does want something back but has only occasionally happened. Mr. Carney gave an update on the status of the policy since June 2013 and discussed the challenges of the pilot program. Mr. Kelley asked what happens to items that are not saved for memorials to which he received an explanation. Mr. Carney brought three COAs to the committee pertaining to the disposition of the items collected in Section 60. Mr. Edwards made a recommendation that the committee vote on COA B – declare collected items as a "memorial collection" which paves the way for use in future exhibits and publications. Mr. Edwards made the motion for the record on COA B. Motion was second and agreed upon by all committee members. Mrs. Fix declared that if this recommendation is implemented then all OIF/OEF families should be provided the opportunity to bring forward items for the collection. Mr. Edwards amended his motion to include the historical memorial collection be under the direction and control of ANC. Mr. Carney explained that the CMH could certainly take over these items since they are the proponent. Vote was done and all agreed. Mr. Kimsey departed and at 1115 and the DFO noted a quorum was still present.

c. The second question reference the future of the Section 60 pilot program was then addressed. HON Cleland stated – “let’s make the presumption the pilot program will end... what is the sense of how we move to a virtual program?” “Is there any value or comfort we could give a family, who wants to leave something at a gravesite that the item is photographed and removed, can still have a connection even if it’s on the internet.” Mr. Carney discussed the possibility of using what private cemeteries use with existing technology by discussing the QR code for families to use at their own expense. HON Cleland talked about how the American Battlefield Monument Commission (ABMC) does this memorialization on the internet and that ANC is working with ABMC. Using technology now continues on forever with no end point. Mr. Edwards wanted to go on record stating that QR code had a cost (approx \$200) that not all families could afford and it would cause an appearance that some families are treated differently.

d. Mr. Peake stated that ANC already memorializes Soldiers by burying them in this hallowed ground and that anything else is a family personal preference. Mr. Davis asked the question of who would be responsible of this virtual information that is added to individual sites. Ms. Jennifer Lynch explained the QR codes more in-depth and stated that it would not be a government sponsored entity but rather a social media site. It would be on the family to add or delete content such as photographs or videos. Mr. Edwards stated he would like to make a motion that committee recommend to the Sec Army that the Pilot program be ended NLT December 2014 which coincides with the removal of troops from OEF. The motion was second by Mr. Davis. Mr. Edwards further discussed that the belief is that the Sec Army has an obligation to respect all members buried in ANC. We have an obligation to set a standard for all future generations. It is increasingly becoming harder to defend that there is a different standard for Section 60 compared to other sections. There is even a different standard within Section 60. This inconsistency is disturbing to members of the subcommittee. This pilot program has spread beyond Section 60 which has resulted in wind chimes in trees and holiday lights which distract from the dignity of ANC. He recommends that the Sec Army terminates the pilot program. Mr. Davis added that as we go into future combat operations we can say that we have a standard that applies to all. One war is not more important than the other which is why the standard should be honorable service to your country. Everyone who is buried here has earned that respect. His concern was that if ANC doesn’t stick to the standard then every time we have a conflict we will be dealing with this same issue. At some point we have to stop making these exceptions.

e. Mr. Kelley stated that the decision points should be considered separately. Mr. Peake wanted to echo Mr. Davis’ comments on the future of Section 60. Stated we have to consider the long term goodness of ANC whereas we recognize their service by virtue of just being here. Fundamentally we need to have a single standard. Mrs. Fix whole-heartedly endorsed the motion. There should not be any distinction between veterans in ANC. We need to have one standard policy on how we will preserve the items and honor the veterans. HON Cleland added his perspective by stating he’s been dealing with this for the past 5 years. Based on his experience with cemeteries there seems to always be mementos or flowers or similar items left at headstones. The expectation that it will still be there when the family returns is that most people expect it

won't. He believes the pilot program should end and believes that should coincide with troops being pulled out of OEF. However, he does think that the service members should be memorialized somewhere virtually specifically on the internet. ANC should move forward in exploring the greater form of technology to continue to memorialize our veterans.

f. HON Cleland supports the motion. Mr. Edwards asked Ms. Yates to clarify what exactly would be allowed in ANC reference flowers, photos, and mementos and stated that we owe it to the families to ensure they understand the rules and the recommendations. Mr. Peake stated we must have consistent policy across the cemetery and that policy must be understood by all. HON Cleland said motion carries after unanimous vote. HON Cleland stated the committee needs to come up with some kind of recommendation for the Sec Army to continue to explore and make a strategy leveraging technology to continue to memorialize the veterans in ANC. Mrs. Fix recommends we do something that is under the direction and control of ANC. Mr. Edwards departed the meeting at 1305 and the DFO noted a quorum was still present.

10. SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS.

a. Honor Sub-committee: Mr. Peake, said it was already covered in the Navy Annex brief.

b. Explore Sub Committee: Mrs. Fix, on behalf of Mr. Edwards the subcommittee chairperson, had nothing to add with the in-depth brief and discussion that was already given on Section 60.

c. Remember Sub Committee: Mr. Davis, talked about the TUS and the cleaning and preservation of it. Ms. Yates spoke of the new ANC Cultural Resource Technician who will be assisting the subcommittee.

11. COMMITTEE REQUESTED INFORMATION AND BRIEFINGS. HON Cleland asked if it's the consensus of the committee to get a briefing from the ANC staff on the way ahead leveraging technology to further memorialize those buried in ANC.

12. FORMAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS. By unanimous vote, the Committee concluded two recommendations to the Secretary of the Army during the Fall 2013 meeting:

a. Over the past two years they have reviewed and assessed the Pilot Program and voted unanimously to recommend to the Secretary of the Army to end the Section 60 Mementos program no later than December 31, 2014 or the withdrawal of combat troops from Afghanistan.

b. Additionally, the committee unanimously voted to recommend that the items collected as part of the program be declared and treated as a historical memorial collection.

13. NEXT MEETING. Proposed timeline from Ms. Yates is end of February beginning of March. HON Cleland said week of 19 February is good for him. Meeting adjourned at 1315.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Max Cleland', written in a cursive style.

Honorable Maxwell Cleland
Chairperson, Advisory Committee on
Arlington National Cemetery