

# ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

## Fact Sheet

### ***A National Shrine...***

Arlington National Cemetery is the final resting place for more than 400,000 active duty service members, veterans and their families. *Service to country* is the common thread that binds all who are remembered and honored here.

Arlington is both a national treasure and an active cemetery. The cemetery conducts between 27 and 30 funerals each week day and between six and eight services on Saturdays – nearly 7,000 services per year.

The cemetery also hosts more than 3,000 ceremonies per year, including wreath-laying ceremonies for national and international dignitaries; memorial and remembrance services; services honoring specialized groups, units and historical events; and national observances for Memorial Day and Veterans Day. More than 3 million people visit Arlington each year.

The cemetery is open 7 days a week, 365 days a year from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., October through March, and from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., April through September.



### ***A Place to Honor...***

Laying our Nation's veterans and their eligible family members to rest with honor and respect, while treating their loved ones with dignity and compassion, is the cornerstone of Arlington National Cemetery's mission.

It's not uncommon for those visiting the cemetery to see a horse-drawn caisson carrying an American flag-draped casket, hear the firing of three rifle volleys in the distance, or feel a lump in their throat as a lone bugler plays the 24 lingering notes of Taps. These honors remind us of service, sacrifice and valor – and are examples

of the dignified way we take care of those who have defended and protected our freedoms.

### ***A Place to Remember...***

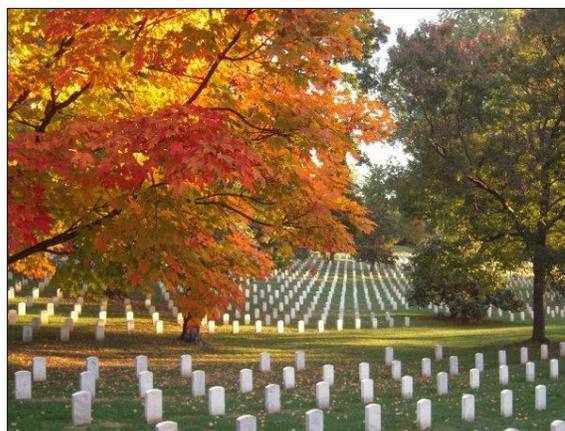
Monuments, memorials and dedicated trees commemorating individuals and significant events in our Nation's history are interspersed throughout the cemetery among the headstones of those for whom Arlington is the final resting place. They honor service members and events from all branches of the military, and also pay respect to astronauts, nurses, chaplains, war correspondents and unknowns, just to name a few. They are important reminders that these men and women will never be forgotten – their legacies will live on and forever be a part of our national fabric.

### ***A Place to Explore...***

Arlington National Cemetery encapsulates America's history – a living tribute to our Nation's past and how it continues to thrive through the service and sacrifice of those willing to dedicate their life to its ideals.

We encourage visitors to discover Arlington's rich history, witness the ceremonies, take in the landscapes and grounds, wander through the headstones and monuments, reflect on the names, and ponder the stories each person could tell.

And with the *ANC Explorer* application that provides information to locate gravesites, places of interest and obtain walking directions and photos, visitors can use the web or their smart phone to enhance their on-site visit or visit the cemetery virtually whenever they wish.



### ***Some Information on Eligibility...***

The cemetery is available for service members who have served in the active duty military and been honorably discharged. The veteran's surviving spouse, minor children, and at the discretion of the Secretary of the Army, unmarried adult dependent children, are also eligible to be interred or inurned with the service member (Army Regulation 290-5 defines an adult dependent child as an adult permanently incapable of self support because of physical or mental disability incurred before age 21).

Those eligible for in-ground burial include:

- Any active duty member of the Armed Forces, except those serving on active duty for training purposes only
- Any retired member of the Armed Forces, who has served on active duty (other than for training), is carried on an official retired list, and is entitled to receive retired pay stemming from service in the Armed Forces on or before the date of death.
- Any former member of the Armed Forces awarded one of the following decorations:
  - Medal of Honor
  - Distinguished Service Cross (Air Force Cross or Navy Cross)
  - Distinguished Service Medal
  - Silver Star
  - Purple Heart
- Any former prisoner of war who, while a prisoner of war, served honorably in the active military, naval, or air service; whose last period of service terminated honorably; and who dies on or after Nov. 30, 1993

More information on eligibility can be found at:

<http://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/FuneralInformation/EstablishServices.aspx>

### ***A bit on Arlington's History...***

Arlington National Cemetery is comprised of land that once belonged to George Washington Parke Custis, adopted grandson of George Washington. Custis spent his life commemorating Washington and built Arlington House on the 1,100-acre plantation as a memorial to the first president. In 1857, Custis willed the property to his only surviving daughter Mary Anna Randolph Custis and her husband Robert E. Lee. After the Lee family vacated the property at the onset of the Civil War in 1861, federal troops used the land as a camp and headquarters.

In 1863, the government established Freedman's Village on the estate as a way to assist slaves transitioning to freedom. The village provided housing, education, employment training, medical care, and food.

A property tax dispute cost the Lee family their home and in 1864, the U.S. government purchased the property and set aside 200 acres of the property to use as a cemetery. The first military burial took place on May 13, 1864, and by the end of the Civil War, thousands of Soldiers and former slaves were buried here.

### ***A bit on Arlington's Future Expansion and Development...***

The cemetery is currently 624 acres. Over the next several years, Arlington's footprint will be increasing, with additional space for both in-ground and above-ground burials, thereby extending its life for several decades to come.

In early 2012, Arlington started construction on its ninth Columbarium Court. This facility will include more than 20,000 niches, allowing Arlington to provide inurnment space for up to 40,000 veterans and their families. The facility is expected to be complete in May 2013.

The Army is also developing plans for two other land expansion projects: the Millennium Project, which is a 30-acre combination of land from Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, the National Park Service, and already existing ANC land; and the 37-acre property that the Navy Annex presently occupies. For each of these projects, Arlington is developing an extensive concept plan that addresses options for inurnments and interments, visitor accessibility, roads, utilities, and other issues that must be addressed to not only ensure maximum use of Arlington's burial space, but to also ensure a smart and successful expansion.

*As of January 2013*