

ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

MEMORIAL ARBORETUM

LIVING COLLECTIONS POLICY

Arlington National Cemetery Mission:

On behalf of the American people, lay to rest those who have served our nation with dignity and honor, treating their families with respect and compassion, and connecting guests to the rich tapestry of the cemetery's living history, while maintaining these hallowed grounds befitting the sacrifice of all those who rest here in quiet repose.

I. Introduction

A. Mission of the Arlington National Cemetery Memorial Arboretum:

The grounds of Arlington National Cemetery honor those who have served our nation by providing a sense of beauty and peace. The purpose of the Memorial Arboretum at Arlington National Cemetery is to preserve and interpret the collection of trees and ornamental plants that serve as a backdrop to this National Shrine. The Arboretum connects visitors to the rich tapestry of the cemetery's living history and natural beauty. Arlington National Cemetery promotes sustainable landscaping in the design and maintenance of these Hallowed Grounds.

B. Purpose of the Collection Policy:

The Living Collection Policy outlines the development, management, enhancement, and sustainment of the Living Collections at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC). This policy applies to all existing and future plantings at ANC, with the scope of the collection being all the woody plants within the established cemetery property.

C. Purpose of the Living Collections:

The Living Collections at Arlington National Cemetery serve as a backdrop and setting for funerals, ceremonies, and visitors, and are an essential component of the natural and cultural heritage of the cemetery. As a whole, the Living Collections, landscapes and gardens at the cemetery serve as a Living Memorial to honor our Nation's veterans and their families. Additionally, the Living Collections are valuable resources for the public, providing opportunities for study and scientific investigation.

D. Administration of the Collection:

The administration, management and maintenance of the Living Collections and the Living Collections Policy are the responsibility of the ANC Horticulture Division. This policy is reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

II. Scope of the Living Plant Collection

A. The total Memorial Arboretum tree collection includes approximately 8,800 trees comprised of about 390 taxa, and about 210 shrub taxa on 624 acres. The Living Collections are divided into three categories: General Collections, Notable Specimens, and Natural Areas. The cemetery has been a fully operational cemetery for over 150 years. Prior to the establishment of Arlington National Cemetery, the property was part of a larger estate of George Washington Parke Custis, as well as the home of Robert E. Lee. Over the course of one and a half centuries, several expansions of the cemetery have resulted in the evolution of a unique blend of designed landscapes as well as significant and notable plantings that tie the Living Collections to the history of this National Shrine.

1) General Collections:

The General Collections consist of the majority of woody plants located throughout the burial sections as well as those that enhance the monuments, buildings, and facilities on the cemetery property.

Plants are included in the General Collection when there is no known information regarding the source or provenance of the plant, the plant is not a particularly exceptional example, or there is no documented significant connection to a particular person, event, or place associated with the plant.

2. Notable Specimen Collections: The trees and shrubs within this collection stand out as being connected to a significant event, person, organization, are a particularly exceptional example of a specimen, or have a unique provenance. Unlike the General Collections, there is existing documentation about the plant's source, provenance, or ceremonial planting. The following are sub collections of the Notable Specimen Collections:

State Champion Trees: Trees that are identified officially by the Virginia Big Tree Program, coordinated by the Virginia Department of Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation at Virginia Tech.

Memorial Tree Collection: This Collection is comprised of trees that have been donated and dedicated by various organizations and associations over the years. A tree will only be added to this collection and designated a Memorial Tree if a plaque or marker is placed at the tree.

Trees of Unique Provenance: Trees in which there is documentation that identifies the exact provenance of the tree. These trees are either direct progeny trees with a unique heritage, are connected to a notable person or event, or have scientific or research significance.

Donated Trees: Over the years, many trees have been donated and planted by friends, family, and loved ones as living memorials. Since 2006, the information about these trees has been put into the tree inventory database. Effective on March 1, 2015, ANC established a policy of no longer accepting and planting tree donations.

Exceptional Specimens: This collection includes trees that are significant or noteworthy because of their remarkable size, age, or other characteristic that distinguishes the plant as a prime example of the species.

Natural Areas:

The cemetery contains one natural area, a portion of the cemetery originally identified as Section 29. This natural area is an excellent example of a Virginia forest and has been well studied over the years. The oldest stand in the forest contained trees estimated to be 175 years old.

III. Plant Selection Criteria

A. Cultural Landscape:

ANC was designated an historic resource on the National Register of Historic Places on April 11, 2014. The ANC Historic District “retains a high level of integrity that conveys its significance as the country’s most sacred national cemetery. ANC combines an atmosphere of dignity and repose with facilities for public visitation, private burials and public ceremonies. The cemetery’s character results from its topography, heavy tree canopy, and manicured appearance, picturesque circulation patterns, and distinctive rows of headstones”. The preservation of the historic character of ANC is a significant selection criterion for new plant acquisitions.

Relevant National Register landscape criteria include design characteristics associated with the informal plantings of the picturesque and rural cemetery movement. The tradition of a picturesque landscape has continued and evolved throughout the course of the cemetery’s history.

Tree and plant selections shall comply with the Integrated Cultural Resource Management Plan (ICRMP), and the associated Programmatic Agreement (PA). Per the PA, trees that are removed are normally replaced ‘In-Kind and In-Place’, meaning with the same species and in the same location. New plantings and designs for development projects should retain the “Iconic Image” of ANC and be complimentary to the existing cultural landscape.

B. Diversity:

Diversified plantings have many benefits including lessening the susceptibility to pests and diseases, greater benefits to wildlife, and attracting more beneficial insects such as pollinators,

predators, and parasitoids. Selections that enhance and increase the diversity are incorporated into the plantings as long as the overall character of the cemetery landscape is retained.

C. Sustainability:

The cemetery incorporates sustainable landscape practices and principles into the design and management of the cemetery landscapes. The Horticulture Division staff consider factors such as drought tolerance, heat tolerance, and pest and disease resistance in all plant selections. The selection of resistant species, cultivars and varieties that leads to a more sustainable landscape shall take priority over a historic planting that requires more maintenance or use of pesticides to meet the Cemetery Operational Standards and Measures.

D. Invasive Species:

Invasive tree and shrub species identified by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation shall not be planted at the cemetery. Removal of existing invasive species will be dependent on funding and operational priorities. Otherwise, they will remain part of the Collections, but will be replaced with a non-invasive species when removed. The cemetery is committed to evaluating plant selections for invasiveness or potential to invade. Selections shall be made in compliance with the Cemetery's Invasive Species Management Plan (ISMP).

IV. Acquisition:

A. Most trees and shrubs are acquired and planted by contractors and must comply with very strict standards and specifications. ANC Horticulture Division staff identifies the species to be planted and may also suggest sources. Whenever possible, trees are selected and tagged in the field by the cemetery Urban Forester or Horticulturist. All trees and shrubs planted under contracts must be true to name and be correctly labeled upon delivery to the cemetery. The cemetery may also require a nursery certificate to authenticate that the plant is true to name.

B. The cemetery accepts gifts of plants only if the plant is part of a trial, evaluation, or research project in which it is agreed that the cemetery retains the plant, or if the gift will significantly enhance the Notable Collections. The Horticulture Division will determine if the plant(s) being offered meets this criteria and where the plant(s) will be planted in the cemetery. The Superintendent of ANC must approve all donations in accordance with AR 1-100, Gifts and Donations, 15 November 1983 based on the recommendation of the Horticulture Division.

V. Inventory:

A. The Horticulture Division staff is committed to maintaining a comprehensive plant records system and up-to-date mapping. Data on trees and shrubs in the cemetery was collected in 2001 and entered into a Microsoft Access database. This data is linked by a tree identification ("Tree ID") number to the GIS data for each tree or shrub. The primary attribute fields in the inventory include the family, genus, species, common name, location within the cemetery, diameter at

breast height (DBH), height class, crown spread class, condition, date planted (if known), source (if known), and other information relevant to the record of the plant.

B. All trees and shrubs are mapped using GIS. The geospatial data for the trees is edited on a regular basis and is integrated into the cemetery Army Mapper program that contains all the gravesites, monuments, buildings, utilities, and other infrastructure within the cemetery. When new trees are planted, the GIS shapefile is updated as soon as possible.

C. The cemetery Horticulture Division staff is responsible for maintaining and updating the tree and shrub inventory and plant records. The ANC GIS staff assists with geospatial data collection.

VI. Accessioning:

A. Trees and shrubs in the collections are assigned a unique identifying number that serves as the accession number. This is the 'Tree ID' number in the cemetery tree and shrub inventory database. All information about the plant and maintenance records are tracked by this number.

B. Only woody plants are accessioned and the plants in the Natural Area are not accessioned. Woody plants that are used as part of a temporary or seasonal display, such as container plantings, will not be accessioned.

VII. Deaccessioning:

A. When a plant in the collections is removed for any reason, the plant is deaccessioned.

B. The existing accession (Tree ID) number and record for that plant remains until the plant is replaced. When the plant is replaced, the information for the new accession takes on that tree ID or accession number.

C. The information and record of the old accession remains in the 'maintenance field', including the date the tree or shrub was removed, as well as the reason for removal.

VIII. Labeling:

A. Not all plants in the Collections are labeled. Plants are labeled for educational and interpretation purposes only. The labeling strategy is to identify trees that are significant, are particularly noteworthy, or are located along highly visited areas of the cemetery.

B. The quantity of labels placed in the cemetery shall not detract from the beauty and aesthetics of the cemetery. The quantity of labels installed should not exceed the capability in funding or resources to maintain the labels.

C. All labels will be uniform in appearance, size, and layout.

D. The Horticulture Division will determine what trees will be labeled.

IX. . Living Collections Maintenance:

A. All landscaping, gardening, arboriculture, turf management, and grounds maintenance is the responsibility of the Horticulture Division staff. The cemetery grounds and plants are maintained to standards established in the Cemetery Operational Standards and Measures and in accordance with ANC's Cemetery Grounds Management Plan.

B. Maintenance activities and tasks are performed by contractors, with Horticulture Division staff serving as Contracting Officer's Representatives (CORs) that assign tasks, monitor, and document contractor performance.

C. All significant maintenance tasks performed to the trees and shrubs within the collections are entered into the 'Maintenance' table in the Access database. These tasks include pruning, installing and inspecting lightning protection or cabling systems, root pruning, storm damage remediation, removal, and planting.

D. Every effort will be made to properly identify the plants in the collection. If the exact species cannot be determined, the record will reflect that the species is unknown. Records will be updated and corrected as the identification of the plants are verified.

X. Access to Collections for Propagation or Study:

A. Requests to collect any plant material from the Memorial Arboretum Living Collections for any purpose such as propagation or study must be made in writing and approved by the Horticulture Division staff.

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Arlington National Cemetery Memorial Arboretum Committee
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