



ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

HONOR · REMEMBER · EXPLORE



Hours

Open daily, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Old Post Chapel Gate Requires DoW Identification
Service Complex Gate Closed on Sundays and Federal Holidays

[X](#) [f](#) [i](#) [y](#) [e](#) @ArlingtonNatl

www.arlingtoncemetery.mil
877-907-8585

Purchase Tram Tickets at the Welcome Center
or by Smartphone at arlingtontours.com



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with ANCI!

Etiquette & Protocol

Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) is both an active cemetery and a historic site. As you visit, be respectful of funeral services and mourners. Speak quietly, use headphones and refrain from approaching funeral processions and working horses. You are welcome to explore and walk on the grass, but please do not run or climb onto cemetery property. Activities such as bicycling, playing sports and picnicking are not allowed.

Visiting Arlington

Download the ANC Explorer app to locate gravesites and take self-guided tours. You can also explore the cemetery by taking a live-narrated tram tour. Purchase tickets in the Welcome Center. To learn more about ANC's history, visit museum exhibits in the Welcome Center and the Memorial Amphitheater Display Room.

History

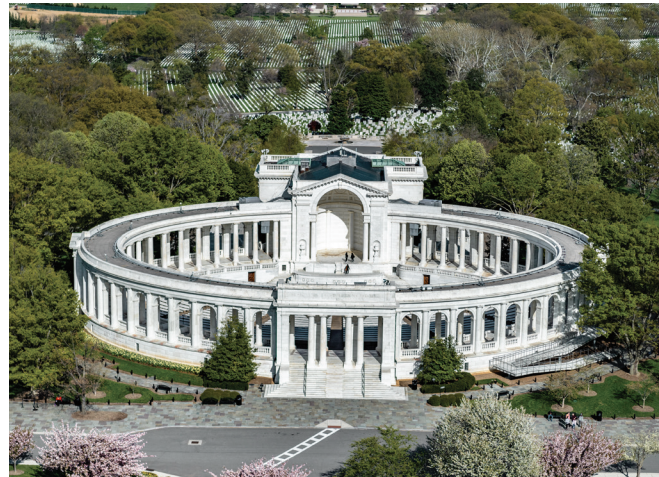
ANC originated during the Civil War. In May 1861, one month after the war began, the U.S. Army seized this land for its strategic military value. On high ground overlooking Washington, D.C., it provided an ideal location to defend the nation's capital. By 1864, the D.C. area had a shortage of burial space due to the staggering number of service members being killed in combat or dying of disease. As a result, the Army began to use this land for burials, and the first U.S. soldier was buried here on May 13, 1864.

Arlington became a national cemetery on June 15, 1864, and its rolling hills were soon filled with graves. Initially, being buried at a national cemetery was not considered an honor. It ensured that service members whose families could not afford to bring them home would receive a proper burial.

However, after the first official, national Decoration Day (now called Memorial Day) was held here in 1868, ANC became increasingly well-known and respected. Veterans wanted to be buried here, and important memorials to America's military past were built. The addition of the Memorial Amphitheater and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in the 1920s confirmed ANC's national prominence.

Today, ANC serves as the final resting place for service members from every period of American history. Visitors from around the world come here to honor, remember and explore the legacies of American service and sacrifice.

ANC's immaculate landscape, maintained by dedicated employees, symbolizes America's commitment to honoring service and sacrifice.



Completed in 1920, the Memorial Amphitheater is the site of the National Memorial Day and Veterans Day observances. The inscriptions on this grand marble structure honor the historic achievements of the American military.



Located across from the Memorial Amphitheater, the USS Maine Memorial honors the sailors and Marines who died when this ship exploded in Havana's harbor in 1898, igniting the Spanish-American War. The memorial centers around the ship's recovered mast and overlooks the graves of those who died on board.



*The first military graves at Arlington are located in what is now **Section 27**. Visit this section to connect with ANC's Civil War origins. You can also explore the graves of freedpeople who escaped enslavement and died in the D.C. area.*

Quick Facts

- Nearly 430,000 service members and their eligible dependents are buried at Arlington National Cemetery. Between 24 and 27 funerals are conducted each weekday.
- ANC currently covers 639 acres. The cemetery's Southern Expansion project, now under construction, will create more burial space in years to come. The expansion will also add the Air Force Memorial to ANC's grounds.
- Older sections include both government-issued markers and private markers purchased by families. As of 2018, ANC no longer permits private markers.
- Military funeral honors at Arlington vary. Elements you may observe include a casket team, bugler, firing party, military band and caisson.
- A Level III Accredited Arboretum, ANC's living landscape honors those laid to rest here. The Horticulture team cares for more than 9,800 trees and offers educational programs, including public tours.
- Numerous daily wreath-laying ceremonies occur at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Participants range from national and international leaders to visiting school groups.
- Arlington played a key role in the evolution of Memorial Day. The Tanner Amphitheater, constructed in 1873, served as the first official venue for this observance.



McClellan Gate, named for Civil War Gen. George B. McClellan, was one of the early entrances to ANC. Its arches feature inscriptions from Theodore O'Hara's 1847 poem "Bivouac of the Dead," an elegy to fallen soldiers widely associated with Civil War-era military cemeteries.

ANC's Education Program

ANC's innovative Education Program provides free resources for students of all ages and adult lifelong learners. It includes lesson plans, primary sources and materials to enhance field trips and bring ANC into the classroom. Check out the self-guided walking tours as you plan your route around the cemetery today.

<https://education.arlingtoncemetery.mil>



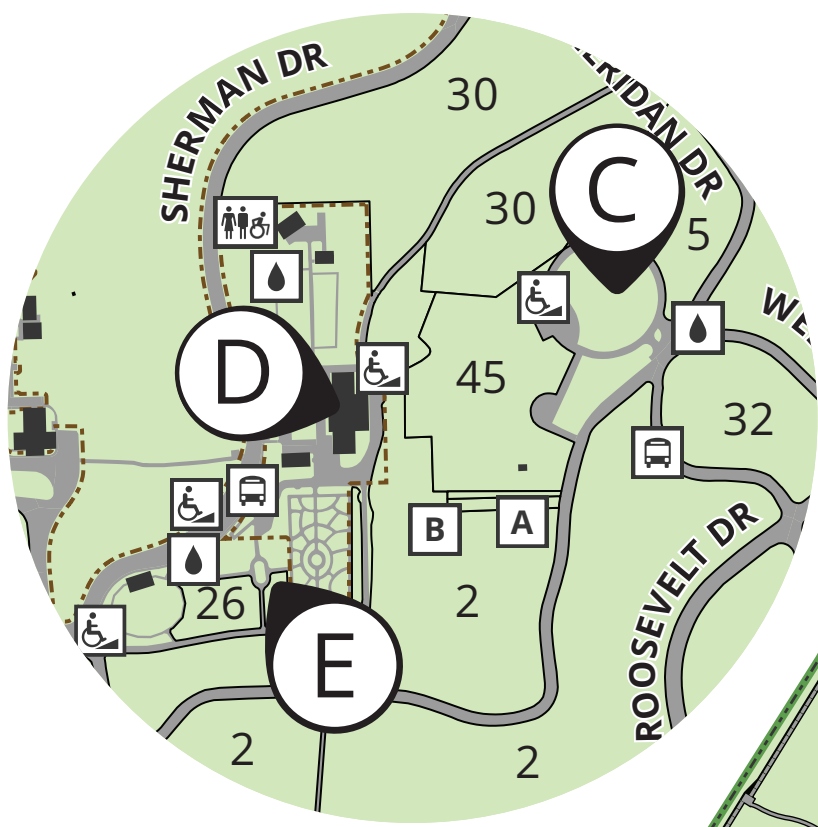
A United States Marine Corps casket team performs military funeral honors during a funeral.

“
These dead ... evoke
from us the most
solemn mood
of consecration.
They died that
peace should
be established.
Our obligation
is to see it
maintained.”

President Herbert Hoover, May 30, 1929



In 1863, before Arlington became a cemetery, the Army used part of this land to create Freedman's Village—a refugee camp for formerly enslaved people. While no trace of the village remains, its legacy is a reminder of the causes and consequences of the Civil War and the challenges of the Reconstruction era.



Download the ANC Explorer app to find gravesite locations and self-guided walking tours.



KEY SITES

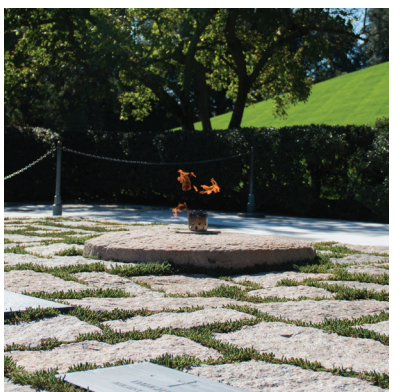
A Welcome Center
At the Welcome Center, you can find restrooms, water and a museum exhibit. You can also purchase tram tickets here.
All listed distances, times, conditions and gradients are relative to the Welcome Center.



B President Taft's Grave
The grave of President William Howard Taft and First Lady Helen Herron Taft is located in Section 30.
.33 mile - 6 Minutes
Stairs, no wheelchair access



C Kennedy Family Gravesite
Honor the graves of President John F. Kennedy (memorialized with an eternal flame), First Lady Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy Onassis and other Kennedy family members nearby.
.4 mile - 8 Minutes
Paved, some gradients



D Arlington House
Operated by the National Park Service, visitors to the Arlington House site can explore the plantation house, enslaved quarters and exhibits.
.75 mile - 12 Minutes
Paved, some steep gradients



E The Tomb of the Civil War Unknowns and Tanner Amphitheater
Located near the historic Tanner Amphitheater, the Tomb of the Civil War Unknowns holds the remains of 2,111 unidentified Civil War soldiers.
.75 mile - 12 Minutes
Paved, some steep gradients



F Tomb of the Unknown Soldier
Witness the Changing of the Guard ceremony every hour on the hour from Oct. 1 to March 31 and every half hour from April 1 through Sept. 30.
.69 mile - 15 Minutes
Paved, some steep gradients

