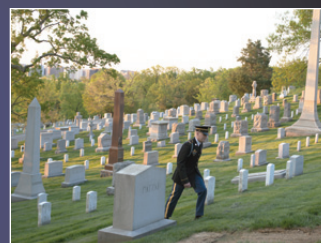
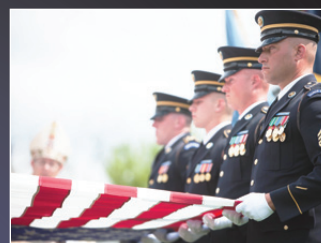


STARS AND STRIPES®

150 YEARS ON HALLOWED GROUND



ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

150 YEARS ON HALLOWED GROUND

ARLINGTON WHO'S THERE?

Among the notables:

■ Presidents William Howard Taft and John F. Kennedy. Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy Onassis was buried beside JFK in 1994. Kennedy's grave is marked with an eternal flame.

■ Chief Justices Earl Warren, Warren Burger and William Rehnquist

■ Senators and brothers Robert F. and Edward M. Kennedy

■ 5-Star General George C. Marshall

■ Pulitzer Prize-winning war correspondent Marguerite Higgins, the only woman correspondent to cover the Korean War

■ Dashiell Hammett, who wrote numerous detective novels, including "The Maltese Falcon" and "The Thin Man" in 1930s, served in World Wars I and II and was jailed during the McCarthy era as communist threat.

■ Spotswood Poles, who was one of the best baseball players in the Negro Leagues during the early 1900s with a batting average of .487

■ Audie Murphy, WWII's most decorated soldier and movie actor who made more than 40 films

■ Glenn Miller, the noted composer and Big Band leader, has a headstone at Arlington, but his body was never found after his plane crashed over the English Channel in 1944.

■ Pvt. William Henry Christman, 67th Pennsylvania Infantry, first military servicemember interred in Arlington National Cemetery, May 13, 1864

■ Anita Newcomb McGee, who was the first woman Army surgeon in 1898, and founder of the Army Nurse Corps in 1900

■ Walter Reed, a pioneer bacteriologist who led experiments establishing mosquito transmission of Yellow Fever

■ Astronauts Lt. Col. Virgil "Gus" Grissom and Lt. Cmdr. Roger Chaffee, who were killed in a fire aboard their Apollo spacecraft at Cape Canaveral, Fla. They are buried next to one another.

■ Mark Matthews, the oldest of the Buffalo Soldiers, at 111

■ Medgar Evers, civil rights leader killed in Mississippi in 1963

■ Thurgood Marshall, First African-American Supreme Court justice

SOURCE: Arlington National Cemetery



Sgt. 1st Class Tanner Welch assists President Barack Obama in laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in 2013.

Courtesy of the U.S. Army

'Old-fashioned discipline'

BY CARLOS BONGIOANNI
Stars and Stripes

Known for its impeccable precision, the changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is one of Arlington National Cemetery's most popular attractions.

Played out every half-hour during the cemetery's summer schedule and every hour the rest of the year, the ceremony marks the end of one sentinel's tour of "walking the mat," and the start of another's. The scene typically evokes a hushed awe from onlookers as they watch the sentinels perform their duties with meticulous exactness. Every footstep, hand placement and eye movement is measured.

The elite tomb guard unit is responsible for safe-guarding the tomb 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The platoon is made up of 31 soldiers from the 3rd Infantry Regiment. Also known as the "Old Guard," the regiment primarily serves as the official U.S. Honor Guard, performing ceremonial duties for the White House, Pentagon, Arlington and other national memorials in the Washington, D.C., area.

Ensuring nothing dishonorable happens at the tomb is a top priority. "The

biggest fear sentinels have is that something might happen to the tomb ... to the unknowns," said Sgt. 1st Class Tanner Welch, sergeant of the guard for the Tomb of the Unknowns Soldier Platoon. "Somebody could throw a can of paint or something at the tomb. And for a sentinel, to have that desecration and disrespect toward the unknowns happen on their watch ... that's probably their number one fear."

After serving in the 3rd Infantry Regiment for six months, soldiers are allowed to apply for specialty platoons such as the tomb guard unit.

All that's required, noted Welch, is some "old-fashioned discipline." Many try out but few are chosen for the job.

"Nothing we do here is rocket science," said Welch, 30. "It's just very basic tasks done to a very high standard."

The high standard that so impresses the crowds is a barrier that nine out of every 10 soldiers who apply are unable to hurdle. The 10 percent who do make it in have typically been through about eight months of rigorous training.

The training includes a series of uniform tests, knowledge tests and outside-performance tests.

On the uniform portion, the amount of "deficiencies" trainees are allowed on

their uniform inspections dwindles until, on the final test, only two "minor deficiencies" are allowed. Minor deficiencies are anything between 1/64th of an inch to 1/32nd of an inch off from the standard. Anything more than 1/32nd of an inch off is considered a major deficiency, and would cause a trainee to fail the program.

For the knowledge test, trainees are required to memorize a 17-page pamphlet. On the final knowledge test, they're allowed 10 deficiencies. It may sound like a lot, but to put it into perspective, Welch noted that if a trainee missed just one comma per page that would be almost double the allowable deficiencies. And, yes, punctuation marks count.

On the outside-performance test, trainees again are allowed just two minor deficiencies on their final test.

"It's incredibly humbling to know that everything you do is for somebody else," said Welch, speaking of the dedication and devotion the sentinels must show to have the privilege of standing guard for the unknowns. "There's a lot of time spent being told, 'You don't meet the standard, you don't meet the standard, you don't meet the standard.' When you finally get to the point where it's like, 'OK, you met the standard, now continue that in somebody else's name,' it's a great thing." The volunteers put out their best for little to no reward. "It speaks to a lot of people in what they hope the world will be like," Welch said.

"You know, if more people were like tomb guards, the world would be a better place."

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'Nothing we do here is rocket science. It's just very basic tasks done to a very high standard.'

Sgt. 1st Class Tanner Welch
Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Platoon
sergeant of the guard

150 YEARS ON HALLOWED GROUND

No one is ever buried alone

BY MEREDITH TIBBETTS
Stars and Stripes

Arlington National Cemetery is a special place for Doreen Huylebroeck.

She brings her 5-year-old grandson there at least once a week, and he knows where his grandfather is buried. He goes right to the grave and kisses the headstone, she said.

"Every day is so meaningful," she said. "I love walking around and seeing the history."

Huylebroeck is part of that history. Five years ago, she joined the Arlington Ladies, an organization that makes certain no one is ever buried alone.

It was founded in 1948, when then Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force Hoyt Vandenberg and his wife, Gladys, were walking through the cemetery. The couple noticed a funeral being held, but the only people there were the chaplain and honor guard. The Vandenberg thought that wasn't right, and she started a tradition.

The women are at Arlington despite rain, snow and extreme heat, attending funerals as a way to give back to military heroes.

"The military person is a hero and he deserves it. It's just a special way to honor him and be there," Huylebroeck



Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

Doreen Huylebroeck offers condolences to Decondi Mayo, father of Petty Officer 2nd Class Mark Mayo, during the funeral service at Arlington National Cemetery in April.

said. "It's our way of saying thank you to him for his service."

The Arlington Ladies is an umbrella group, with volunteers from the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy and Coast Guard. The Marine Corps have their own group, separate from the Arlington Ladies.

Huylebroeck joined two years after her own husband, Chief Petty Officer Edward Huylebroeck, was buried at Arlington. She said it took a few nudges from friends before she signed up.

"After my husband died, I cried and cried, but you get to the point where you say you really do want to give back," she said.

Huylebroeck attends mostly Navy funerals, and is one of about 50 women who volunteer for the Navy. The Army, a much bigger service branch, has many more women to compensate for more funerals. All the women in the group have a direct connection to the military. Huylebroeck said most are military spouses, but some are also military daughters. The Navy women work half days: There are about six funerals a day for US Navy servicemembers at Arlington, so one person will cover the morning funerals and another will attend three more in the afternoon.

"I never thought I could be an Arlington Lady. I thought I would cry no matter what," she said. "You just have that inner strength and you know you are there for support for the family."

And Huylebroeck goes above and beyond to do that. The Navy women meet relatives in the family room before

a service; other branches do not. Huylebroeck takes the time to get to know the family a bit. She reads an obituary beforehand, so she has talking points and a way to connect. If a family isn't local, she gives them her contact information and offers to place flowers on the grave on a birthday or anniversary. She pays for the bouquet out of her own pocket and says she is nothing but a link between the family and the grave.

"It's the least I can do. I would appreciate it if someone did it for me," she said.

She's attended close to 500 funerals, she said, and some are harder than others. She recently attended the funeral of Mark Mayo, a sailor from Maryland who was shot and killed protecting another sailor aboard USS Mahan at Naval Station Norfolk.

That funeral, she said, was particularly hard. So was attending the funerals of a 2-year-old and twin babies.

"This year isn't really any more special than last year or next year," she said of Arlington, which is marking its 150th anniversary. "It's just always special."

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ARLINGTON JUST THE FACTS

A Supreme Court ruling in 1882 could have resulted in the exhumation of 17,000 graves. More than a decade after Robert E. Lee's death, the Supreme Court ruled that the U.S. government had seized his estate without due process and ordered it returned to his family in the same condition as when it was illegally confiscated. If followed, the ruling could have required the exhumation of all of Arlington's dead, but instead Lee's son officially sold the property to Congress for \$150,000 in 1883.

Nearly 3,800 "citizens" or "contrabands" (former slaves who were living in Freedman's Village on the Arlington Estate) are interred in Section 27.

Three enemy combatants are buried at Arlington — one Italian and three German POW who died in captivity in Washington, D.C.

The first graves in Arlington National Cemetery were dug by James Parks, a former Arlington Estate slave. Buried in Section 15. Parks is the only person buried there who was born on the property.

Individuals may request a flag to be flown over the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Not allowed: playing musical instruments, bringing pets or having picnics. Check for more rules before you go.

The Old Amphitheater has a new name.

On May 30, the building was renamed after Civil War wounded warrior James R. Tanner, who is buried a few yards away in Section 2, Grave 877.

Tanner, a corporal in the 87th New York Volunteer Infantry, lost both legs after the Second Battle of Bull Run in 1862. He later became a stenographer and was present at Abraham Lincoln's deathbed. He was also an advocate for veterans' rights.

The building was used from 1873-1920 before the Memorial Amphitheater was dedicated.

SOURCES: www.history.com; www.arlingtoncemetery.mil; www.connectionnewspapers.com

"The military person is a hero and he deserves it. It's just a special way to honor him and be there. It's our way of saying thank you to him for his service."

Doreen Huylebroeck

150 YEARS OF HONOR AND GRATITUDE.

As we commemorate the establishment of
Arlington as a national cemetery, we pay
tribute to all who grace its hallowed ground.



150 YEARS ON HALLOWED GROUND

ARLINGTON SECTION 60

“Christopher David Horton, Spc. U.S. Army, Afghanistan, Oct. 1, 1984, Sept. 9, 2011, Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Valiant Warrior, Fearless Sniper” are words on one of more than 900 graves from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars in the cemetery’s Section 60.

For the dead — like Horton, killed in a hail of enemy AK-47 fire — the words are a spare summary of sacrifice; what Abraham Lincoln called “the last full measure of devotion.”

It was the outpouring of grief by young widows, parents and battle buddies that led to the only consistent splash of color within the cemetery — the balloons, childhood drawings, stuffed Easter bunnies and unopened bottles of beer left on the graves of Iraq and Afghanistan war dead.

The now-widely recognized Section 60 is a long stroll from popular tourist sites such as the Kennedy grave and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Unlike the deceased retired military that make up most of the 27-30 burials that occur at Arlington each day, the dead of Section 60 were so young, that the grieving here is far more intense.

So it is a place where a grieving father may be seen laying prostrate on his son’s grave or where a mother sits in a thunderous downpour unaware that her lawn chair is sinking into a softening earth.

Those who mourn regularly have coalesced into a kind of club, but one that one mother conceded “nobody wants to be in.”

— Gregg Zoroya, USA Today



‘A big honor and a big responsibility’

BY MEREDITH TIBBETTS

Stars and Stripes

The final resting place for more than 400,000 active duty service-members, veterans and their families is 624 acres of peace and beauty.

Maintaining the beauty at one of the oldest cemeteries in the United States falls to a small group of people, three of whom are government employees, including Horticulturist Division Chief Steve Van Hoven. Additional contract employees help out as well.

There are 8,500 trees — 300 varieties — spread across the acreage.

The oldest tree in the cemetery is estimated to be 250 years old. But that estimate could be off — it’s hard to tell how old a tree is until it falls over and someone can count the rings. Van Hoven said about 100 trees predate the Civil War, and some even predate Arlington House, the former home of Robert E. Lee.

“We plant about 250 trees every year. Those are mostly to replace trees that either die of disease, insect pests, fall over in a storm. Usually we are just planting the same tree in the location” of a dead one, Van Hoven, 44, said.

Dying trees aren’t the only problem for horticulturists. At Arlington, some trees grow over — or start to uproot — grave markers. When that happens, the grave gets a foot marker to keep it within Army regulations. When a tree located between gravestones is replaced, a smaller tree is planted to prevent overgrowth.

“It takes a lot of planning. You need to be organized and you need to think ahead. You can’t just go out there you know, three days before (a funeral) and say that tree isn’t looking good or the turf is a problem,” Van Hoven said.

He has worked at Arlington



Four seasons
at Arlington

MEREDITH TIBBETTS/Stars and Stripes



JOE GROMELSKI/Stars and Stripes



JOE GROMELSKI/Stars and Stripes



JOE GROMELSKI/Stars and Stripes

since 2006, when he was hired as an urban forester. Before that, he worked at the Smithso-

nian Institution for two years. “They are two very different missions,” each with high vis-

ibility, Van Hoven said.

“Arlington National Cemetery is the most sacred ground and it is an honor to work here. Horticulture is not the main focus, but we are proud to keep Arlington beautiful as the backdrop.”

His time is split between office work and field work, but this time of year — spring and summer — he spends most of his time outdoors supervising.

The contractors are the people who literally get their hands dirty, while Van Hoven does diagnostics and surveys to see what needs to be done.

“I really like being out in the field, dealing with the plants and trees and not doing paperwork,” the New York native said.

Each section of the cemetery is mowed at least once a week during the growing season, and each tree gets pruned about once every four years.

The landscape of the cemetery is changing, as projects expand the land and rework undeveloped land.

This will provide additional space for in-ground and above-ground burials. The cemetery’s ninth Columbarium Court was dedicated last year. Just last month, the cemetery was named to the National Park Services’ National Register of Historic Places.

Arlington is also in the process of becoming an arboretum, which involves labeling a portion of the trees.

“These very simply tell visitors what sort of trees they are as they walk by,” Van Hoven said. “Most of those are going to be found along major walkways and tourist areas as you walk through the cemetery.”

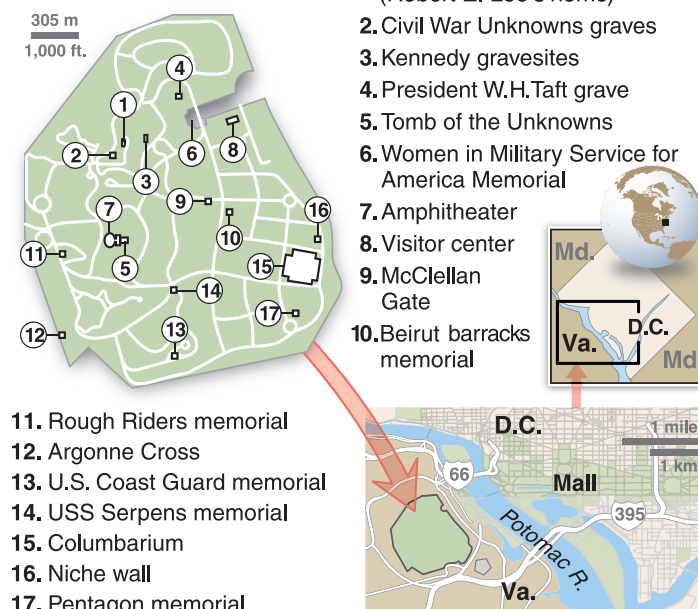
Labeled trees were picked based on their species and how noteworthy they are. For example, two state championship trees at Arlington have special labels. There are also 36 memorial trees that serve as a living tribute to Medal of Honor recipients.

“It’s a big honor and a big responsibility,” Van Hoven said of working at the cemetery. “It can be a challenging place.”

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150 YEARS ON HALLOWED GROUND

Cemetery grounds



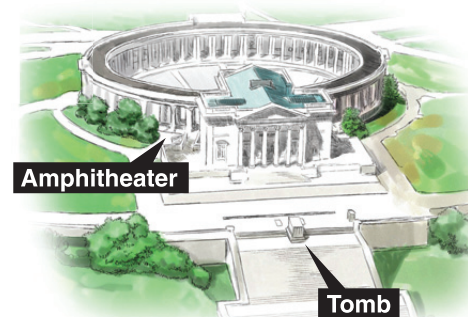
Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

Bodies of unidentified American dead from the two world wars, Korea and Vietnam rest in the marble tomb.



Memorial Amphitheater

Tomb is guarded 24 hours a day, every day, in all weather.



• Guard paces 21 steps and faces tomb for 21 seconds, symbolizing a 21-gun salute.

• Guards from 3rd Infantry Regiment Army unit known as the Old Guard.

MCT

SOURCES: Third United States Infantry, Arlington National Cemetery, Pentagon Library, Military District of Washington

ARLINGTON THE NUMBERS

400,000

active duty servicemembers, veterans and their families are buried there

7,000

services held each year, with 27-30 each weekday and six to eight on Saturdays

624

acres of cemetery

24

lingering notes of "Taps"

'At the end of the day, you are still dealing with death'

By MEREDITH TIBBETTS
Stars and Stripes

When families are at their most vulnerable, huddling together and recalling the memory of their recently deceased over a new grave, the caretakers of Arlington National Cemetery fade into the background. But behind the scenes, they provide one of the most important tasks: They bury the dead.

Jeffrey Lee spent three years as a caretaker at Arlington before being promoted to his current position as a cemetery representative. The job, he said, is emotionally and physically demanding.

"As a caretaker we covered pretty much everything from internments to inurnments, closing the gravesites, setting

up gravesites, all preparation for funeral services. We replace headstones. We make sure graves are closed properly and covered up."

Lee, who is a native of the Washington, D.C., area, started out as a caretaker contractor with a company for about five years, and when his contract job came to Arlington, he said he instantly fell in love with the place. After the company lost the contract, a new company picked it up and Lee moved to that company to stay with Arlington. A few months later he was working directly for Arlington.

"This is one of the few places that I could see a career coming out of it," said Lee, 41.

Being a cemetery representative is less hands-on than his role as a caretaker. He no longer repairs graves; instead



MEREDITH TIBBETTS/Stars and Stripes

Jeffrey Lee, a former caretaker and current cemetery representative, poses at Arlington National Cemetery in May.

he makes direct contact with the family of the deceased. The day before a funeral, he calls the family to introduce himself, make a connection and to make it less awkward on the day of burial when they meet in the family room.

"Grief comes in all different types. Some people are angry. Some people laugh to hide the grief. Some people just take it harshly. It's knowing people and knowing how to deal in those situations," that are key to his job, Lee said.

From a caretaker's perspective, you deal with families as well, but in a different way, he

said. He said you see first-hand the families grieving over a headstone.

Lee never served in the military. "I think every service, every branch of service, makes me feel like I wished I could have served.

"This place is so rich in history," he said.

But no funeral is ever easy.

"At the end of the day, you are still dealing with death," he said. "Even when a family comes in and they are in a good mood, you know deep inside they are in pain."

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