



**National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore**

Office of the Superintendent

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EFFECTIVE DATE: September 12, 2006

A64 (SLBE)
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SUBJECT: Cemetery Policy - North and South Manitou Islands

CONTACT: Chief Ranger

REFERENCE: National Park Service Management Policies 2001, Sections 5.3.4, 6.3.8, and 8.6.10
National Park Service Personnel Management Letter 92-20, dated January 28, 1993
Title 36 Code of Federal Regulations Section 2.62
Director's Order #19, Records Management
Director's Order #41, Wilderness Preservation and Management; Reference Manual #41
Director's Order #53, Special Park Uses; Reference Manual #53

A. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for past residents of North and South Manitou Islands to be buried in the island cemeteries.

B. Background

Interest by past residents of North and South Manitou Islands to be buried in the island cemeteries became evident in the 1980s. Titles to both cemeteries were checked with local township officials to determine ownership and jurisdiction. Glen Arbor Township quitclaimed ownership of the South Manitou cemetery to the National Park Service in 1986. No record of township or "association" ownership/administration was found for the North Manitou cemetery. The deed transferring property to the National Park Service from the Angell Foundation is assumed to include this cemetery.

C. Eligibility

Past residents and land owners, whose historical ties are associated with North and South Manitou Islands, may request burial in the island cemeteries. The cemeteries will become inactive when the boundaries are filled, at which time additional burial requests will be denied. No burials will be allowed outside the present boundaries, and ownership is retained by the National Park Service.

D. Procedures

1. Burials of bodies or cremated remains shall meet State of Michigan and local township statutes covering the interment of deceased persons. A Transit/Burial Permit shall be obtained by the

party arranging for the burial from the County Clerk. A copy shall be provided to the Superintendent prior to the burial. Burials will only be permitted from mid-May through September.

2. A concrete vault (outer burial container) will be provided by the party arranging for a body burial. Arrangements for transportation of the vault to the islands need to be made in advance with the Superintendent.

3. All arrangements for burial or memorial services will be requested in writing to the Superintendent. The Superintendent, or her designee, will develop a schedule with the family concerning the steps leading to the burial of the decedent. This will include submitting copies of permits, and scheduling the transportation of the equipment to dig the grave and haul the vault. Cost recovery fees may be charged by the National Park Service for any associated services provided by the Lakeshore.

4. Arrangements for transportation of the casket, cremated ashes, family members and mourners, and grave markers are the responsibility of the family or funeral director. Names and phone numbers of concession operations providing boat transportation to the islands can be obtained by contacting the National Park Service headquarters in Empire, Michigan. The fees for these transportation services will be determined by the concessioner.

5. Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 2.62 (a) states that installation of a monument, memorial, tablet, structure, or other commemorative installation in a park area without the authorization of the Director is prohibited. The intent of this regulation is not to restrict grave markers in National Park Service owned cemeteries.

Grave markers and monuments placed in both the North and South Manitou Island cemeteries will be similar in size, color, and materials to other markers in the cemetery. A photograph and a detailed description of the proposed headstone and specific proposed location, for both cemeteries, will be submitted to the Superintendent for approval before it is purchased or placed. No pickets will be placed around burial sites, unless historical evidence shows it appropriate.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) furnishes upon request, at no charge to the applicant, a government headstone or marker for the grave of any deceased eligible veteran in any cemetery around the world. Flat markers in granite, marble, and bronze and upright headstones in granite and marble are available. The style chosen must be consistent with existing monuments at the place of burial. White crosses 24 inches high have been used in the past to replace deteriorated wooden markers. Both the VA and the white cross markers are acceptable for use in both cemeteries.

6. National Park Service Management Policies, 8.6.10.3 states that the scattering of ashes from cremation may be permitted by a Superintendent, in accordance with National Park Service general regulations in Title 36 CFR. Authorization to scatter ashes must take into account potential conflicts with the spiritual or cultural practices of the indigenous people associated with the area.

E. Visits to Cemeteries

On South Manitou Island, families may continue to visit the cemetery at their convenience. Transportation is provided by the National Park Service concessioner via motor vehicle tours. On North Manitou Island, the cemetery is in an area managed as wilderness. This means that motorized access is limited and may only be granted under an exemption signed by the Superintendent.

The Superintendent will consider requests for government-owned vehicle travel between the North Manitou Island village and burial sites for descendants who are elderly or have limited mobility. Requests for transportation should be made in writing 30 days in advance to the Superintendent. In considering requests, a minimum requirement analysis will be used that considers impacts on park resources and values, and disturbance to other island visitors. A time schedule will be agreed upon

between the descendants and the National Park Service before each visit is undertaken. The National Park Service is not liable for injuries or losses encountered through use of government owned vehicles. If approved, the transportation request may be subject to cost recovery fees charged by the National Park Service for this service.

F. Maintenance

National Park Service Management Policies 2001, Wilderness and Preservation Management, 6.3.8 states that cultural resources that have been included within wilderness will be protected and maintained according to the pertinent laws and policies governing cultural resources, using management methods that are consistent with the preservation of wilderness character and values. Cemeteries or commemorative features, such as plaques or memorials, that have been included in wilderness may be retained (including approved access to these sites), but no new cemeteries or additions to existing cemeteries may be made unless specifically authorized by federal statute, existing reservations, or retained rights.

The following standards address treatment of park cemeteries, including those in private ownership.

- The cemetery is managed in a manner that recognizes its significance and preserves and interprets the cultural landscape as a whole. The character-defining features of the cemetery, such as general organization and layout, plant materials, roads and pathways, fences, and the placement of statuary and grave markers, are documented and incorporated in a maintenance program.
- Maintenance activities do not impair the significant character and individual features of the cultural landscape. Mowing, weed whipping, and use of commercial herbicides immediately next to grave markers are avoided.
- The repair, cleaning, consolidation, and resetting of grave markers are supervised by a historical architect and other professionals, as appropriate.
- New landscape features are compatible with the original design and character of the cemetery and do not negatively impact the significant built or natural features (e.g., new trees are planted so that roots will not later damage or disrupt grave markers and curbing).

No new vegetation, cut flowers, or artificial flowers will be added to the grave sites. Any new grave sites will be allowed to naturally revegetate with surrounding herbaceous plant materials. This policy is to prevent introduction of exotic vegetation on the islands. Existing non-native plants on grave sites will not be removed, but will be prevented from spreading.

It is assumed that descendants will replace pickets around the family plot. Where there are no living descendants, the National Park Service will attempt to restore those fences. No new fences will be placed in wilderness area or around plots that historically had no fencing.

The routine maintenance of the island cemeteries is the responsibility of the National Park Service. Budgetary constraints may limit the agency's ability to comply with this policy, and the National Park Service will not be held liable for this decision. In the past, volunteer labor has been used to provide work at the cemeteries. The National Park Service will continue to work with persons and organizations interested in providing this volunteer service.

/s/ Dusty Shultz
Signed original on file

This policy replaces Policy Release Number #95-01 dated June 27, 1989.