



Loudoun County, Virginia

www.loudoun.gov

NEWS RELEASE

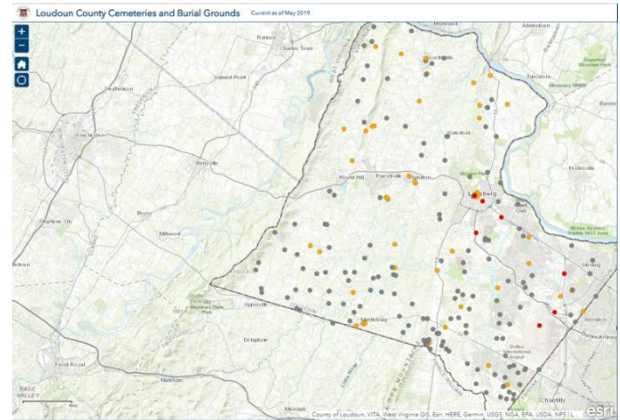
Office of the County Administrator, Public Affairs and Communications
1 Harrison Street, SE, P.O. Box 7000, Leesburg, VA 20177-7000
703-777-0113 • Fax 703-771-5841

For Immediate Release
June 5, 2019

Media Contact: Glen Barbour, Public Affairs and Communications Officer
703-771-5086, Glen.Barbour@loudoun.gov

Loudoun County Unveils Historic Cemeteries Map

Loudoun County has developed online tools designed to help preserve and protect historic cemeteries in the county. The county has identified more than 200 active and historic cemeteries and burial grounds in Loudoun and provided location and background information for each of them on an interactive map. In addition, a companion “Story Map” provides a method for residents to learn about the initiative and share information with the county about potentially unmapped graves, burial grounds and cemeteries.



The new tools were debuted at the June 4, 2019, Board of Supervisors business meeting. The Board commissioned the map, which was produced by the Office of Mapping and Geographic Information (GIS), in consultation with the Department of Planning and Zoning. The county created a database of active and inactive cemeteries that could provide residents, researchers and developers with more knowledge of cemetery locations within the county, as well as documents the known histories of the sites.

While the county has collected information about historic cemeteries and burial grounds over the years, this is the first systematic effort to consolidate locational information into a publicly accessible database.

“We faced a number of challenges in this project,” said Office of Mapping and GIS Director Kristin Brown. “The socio-economic status of Loudoun residents varied widely in the 17th century, including enslaved African Americans, poor tenant farmers, and wealthy property owners. As a result, burial traditions varied. People were often buried on private property, sometimes with engraved monuments or headstones, but often with wooden markers that have since disintegrated.”

Most of the cemeteries inventoried are on private property. The interactive map includes a notice that Virginia Code regulates access to cemeteries on private property and links to the [specific section, § 57-27.1](#), that covers the rights of landowners and the rights of those such as family members or descendants who would like to access cemeteries located on private property.

“The interactive map is intended to serve as a tool for documenting history and future land use planning,” Brown added. “It’s important to identify the sites, but we also encourage residents to follow the law.”

MORE

To identify the sites and develop the interactive maps, the county worked collaboratively with various historians and property owners and other stakeholders including the Thomas Balch Library; Thomas Balch Library Black History Committee; Loudoun Freedom Center; Loudoun Heritage Commission; Loudoun Historic Cemetery Committee; Oatlands; the Loudoun Preservation Society; and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

The companion Story Map provides information on how the data was collected and the challenges of locating the graves or burial grounds of the enslaved. The county anticipates that there are cemeteries that remain unknown or have yet to be discovered and has provided an online form for residents to share information with the county about other locations of cemeteries, burial grounds and graves or to provide additional details or corrections to the data presented in the map.

The interactive map and Story Map are posted on the Loudoun County website [here](#). A hardcopy map will also be available.

#