2021 ANNUAL REPORT





Letter from the President

Dear Congressional Cemetery Community,

The year 2021 was one of transitions-- from partially vaccinated to fully boosted, completely virtual to small in-person gatherings, and the passing of the baton from long-time beloved president Paul Williams to an unknown museum director from Norfolk. Transitions are not always easy, and the support of this community has been felt throughout our hallowed grounds all year round. I am thankful to count myself among the many dedicated volunteers, donors, and professionals who make supporting our mission possible.

Despite the ongoing pandemic and changes in leadership, our outreach and conservation efforts continued. We welcomed thousands of people to our historic landmark through K9 membership and day passes, volunteer workdays, our popular public events like Soul Strolls and Cinematery, and John Philip Sousa's birthday celebration. We continued to live authentically into our mantra, "At Congressional Cemetery, You Belong," by celebrating the diverse interments on our property through educational programming. Finally, we are humbled that dozens of you gave us the ultimate gift of choosing Congressional Cemetery as the final resting place for yourself or your family members. Thank you for your continued support as we move into 2022.

It is my greatest wish that 2022 marks an era of renewal for the cemetery filled with opportunities to engage with our resilient, vibrant community on Capitol Hill and beyond. We will focus on building relationships, practicing inclusion, and continuing to host events and programs like those that earned us the title of "America's Hippest Cemetery". We will get back to what we do best-- promoting, protecting, and preserving our historic and active burial ground.

You can play a valued part in this transformational period in our story. I hope you find this report emphasizes all the reasons you should be in our Congressional Cemetery community. Because here, you really do belong.

Yours in Service,

Jacky Spaindoen

Jackie Spainhour President



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About Historic Congressional Cemetery



ith the first burial in 1807, Historic Congressional Cemetery is among the oldest institutions in Washington, DC, and the final resting place for scores of individuals who were instrumental in the founding of the nation and its new capital city. In addition, it is the only place in Washington where one can be buried in a site directly on L'Enfant's 18th century city plan.

Historic Congressional Cemetery was designated a National Historic

Landmark in 2011 and continues to build upon the legacy of over 200 years of American history. The Cemetery is administered by the nonprofit Association for the Preservation of Historic Congressional Cemetery and owned by Christ Church + Washington Parish. The Association is constantly striving to maintain the historic, cultural, and aesthetic qualities of this natural landscape along the Anacostia River.

- Hundreds of volunteers each year help maintain and promote the cemetery.
- Burial sites are still available to the general public.
- Notable burials include John Philip Sousa, the March King; Mathew Brady, civil war photographer; and Elbridge Gerry, signer of the Declaration of Independence.
- Veterans from every American war are buried in the Cemetery.
- We promote innovative and sustainable practices, such as beekeeping, grazing goats, and a dog-walking program, and are the only cemetery in Washington, DC, that allows green burial options.
- Congressional Cemetery is open to the public every day from dawn to dusk. Unless special circumstances require it, we do not allow cars to drive in, but we welcome visitors to walk around the grounds and explore the history that is here.

The Association for the Preservation of Historic Congressional Cemetery is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Donations are fully tax deductible.

Association for the Preservation of Historic Congressional Cemetery https://congressionalcemetery.org/ 1801 E Street SE | Washington, DC 20003 | 202-543-0539 | staff@congressionalcemetery.org

Our Mission

Historic Congressional Cemetery preserves, promotes, and protects our historic and active burial ground. We respectfully celebrate the legacy of those interred here through education, historic preservation, community engagement, and environmental stewardship.

2021 at a Glance

50

new trees planted (supporting Casey Trees' mission to recanopy D.C.)

9,184

K9 day passes sold for people and pups to try membership

810

K9 Corps dogs enjoyed socially distant romps (and runs and barks and wags)

35

headstones restored and

75

headstones cleaned (38% of the northeast quadrant of Section 3 is now complete)

5,388

people attended events and more than

\$110,315

in income generated (from classic monster movies, reviving the Prohibition Era, strolling with souls, and more)

7,627 hours worked by

568

volunteers (equivalent to more than \$217,000 in savings at the federal volunteer rate of \$28.54/hour)

43,147

virtual partygoers celebrated John Philip Sousa's birthday (including viewers in Germany, Italy and Brazil)

\$307,409

in income generated from site sales and burials

2021 Income and Expenses



Historic Congressional Cemetery preserves, promotes, and protects our historic and active burial ground.

Accomplishments and Highlights

Education

For more than 200 years the history of Washington, DC — and the United States — has been written on the stones of Historic Congressional Cemetery. To preserve these stories and celebrate the histories of the nation and our neighborhood, we continued to adapt to reach audiences around the world through:

- Our dedicated docents, who provided 75 tours for a total of more than 584 visitors.
- The creation of Last Call: Prohibition Lantern Tours, a new immersive, historical theater program featuring residents of the cemetery, a secret speakeasy, and character guides. This sold out event hosted 827 visitors over three evenings.
- We hosted programs in partnership with seven organizations including Blue Bird Sky Sound Meditation, DC Strings, DC Front Runners, Rockville Orchestra, Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run, Video Consortium, and Yoga District.

Historic Preservation

Our commitment to protecting Historic Congressional Cemetery as a National Historic Landmark was made possible this year thanks to the efforts of a summer intern working 256 hours, as well as 647 hours of sweat equity from our Preservation and Restoration Opportunities (PRO) crew volunteers. The work of these individuals helped make possible:

- Cleaning 75 headstones, setting 33 new foundations, and repairing 35 memorials.
- Spreading concrete and placing river rocks over 1,200 square feet of surface area.
- Eagle Scout Project increasing swale drainage and reducing soil/plant accumulation.
- Eagle Scout Project cleaning ten memorials and providing interpretive signage for four prominent residents.



Community Engagement

As the pandemic continued to guide our daily lives, engagement with our local community became our cornerstone for success. Despite the many challenges associated with this time, we found plenty of friends waiting in the wings of Capitol Hill to help us fulfill our mission, gather safely, and aid us in celebrating our heritage.

- We hosted Cinematery as Dinner & A Movie once again, presenting "Classic Monsters" and supporting community businesses through the DC Mess Hall.
- The Dead Man's Run had 496 registrants, but weather forced the event virtual. With the option to transfer registration to 2022, only 16 people requested refunds.
- The annual Soul Strolls was a sold-out event, bringing 1,494 visitors to experience our history over four nights in October, including the return of the VIP package.
- We were delighted to hold a socially-distanced outdoor birthday celebration for John Philip Sousa as our new president's first official act, which honored the dedicated volunteers at our cemetery as well as the great musician and the U.S. Marine Corps Band, reaching 19,327 with the live stream.
- Halloween Pet Portraits and Tombs & Tomes Book Club rounded out our 2021 activities.

Environmental Stewardship

The pandemic helped us to see that now, more than ever, we need to celebrate and protect our sacred outdoor gathering spaces. We continued to focus our efforts on the landscape and beautiful trees that provide comfort and clean air to our visitors by:

- Welcoming 15 new gardeners to the Adopt-a-Plot program for a total of 93 in the program and established a new tracking system.
- Planting 50 trees in the fall as part of Casey Trees' mission to re-canopy DC.
- Beautifying family plots, front entrance to the cemetery, perimeter fence, and the 17th Street hill.
- Collecting a bountiful harvest of honey which sold out in a matter of hours.



Donors

Historic Congressional Cemetery wishes to thank its many donors and supporters whose generosity makes it possible for us to continue to celebrate the legacy of those interred here and serve as stewards of more than 200 years of history in our Nation's capital.

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The Association for the Preservation of Historic Congressional Cemetery

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