
National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory
1998



Chalmette National Cemetery
Jean Lafitte NHP and Preserve - Chalmette Unit

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Inventory Summary

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory Overview:

CLI General Information:

Purpose and Goals of the CLI

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI), a comprehensive inventory of all cultural landscapes in the national park system, is one of the most ambitious initiatives of the National Park Service (NPS) Park Cultural Landscapes Program. The CLI is an evaluated inventory of all landscapes having historical significance that are listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, or are otherwise managed as cultural resources through a public planning process and in which the NPS has or plans to acquire any legal interest. The CLI identifies and documents each landscape's location, size, physical development, condition, landscape characteristics, character-defining features, as well as other valuable information useful to park management. Cultural landscapes become approved CLIs when concurrence with the findings is obtained from the park superintendent and all required data fields are entered into a national database. In addition, for landscapes that are not currently listed on the National Register and/or do not have adequate documentation, concurrence is required from the State Historic Preservation Officer or the Keeper of the National Register.

The CLI, like the List of Classified Structures, assists the NPS in its efforts to fulfill the identification and management requirements associated with Section 110(a) of the National Historic Preservation Act, National Park Service Management Policies (2006), and Director's Order #28: Cultural Resource Management. Since launching the CLI nationwide, the NPS, in response to the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), is required to report information that respond to NPS strategic plan accomplishments. Two GPRA goals are associated with the CLI: bringing certified cultural landscapes into good condition (Goal 1a7) and increasing the number of CLI records that have complete, accurate, and reliable information (Goal 1b2B).

Scope of the CLI

The information contained within the CLI is gathered from existing secondary sources found in park libraries and archives and at NPS regional offices and centers, as well as through on-site reconnaissance of the existing landscape. The baseline information collected provides a comprehensive look at the historical development and significance of the landscape, placing it in context of the site's overall significance. Documentation and analysis of the existing landscape identifies character-defining characteristics and features, and allows for an evaluation of the landscape's overall integrity and an assessment of the landscape's overall condition. The CLI also provides an illustrative site plan that indicates major features within the inventory unit. Unlike cultural landscape reports, the CLI does not provide management recommendations or

Chalmette National Cemetery
 Jean Lafitte NHP and Preserve - Chalmette Unit

treatment guidelines for the cultural landscape.

Inventory Unit Description:

Chalmette National Cemetery is a 17.3-acre tract of designed landscape which is set apart within a brick-walled enclosure that runs along the eastern edge of Chalmette Battlefield. The cemetery was established in 1864 for the interment of Union soldiers killed during the Civil War in Louisiana. It was administered by the War Department from 1868 until 1933, when it was turned over to the National Park Service and incorporated into the Chalmette National Historical Park.

Historic features include the 1929 brick cemetery lodge and carriage house complex, which now serves as park administrative and maintenance headquarters, an ornamental iron entrance gate from the War Department-era (1864-1933), the distinctive post-and-panel brick walls which enclose the cemetery, the G.A.R. Monument, which was erected in 1882 to honor Union war dead, several remnant allees of live oak and sycamore, and the archeological remnants of the British advanced battery used during the Battle of New Orleans.

Site Plan

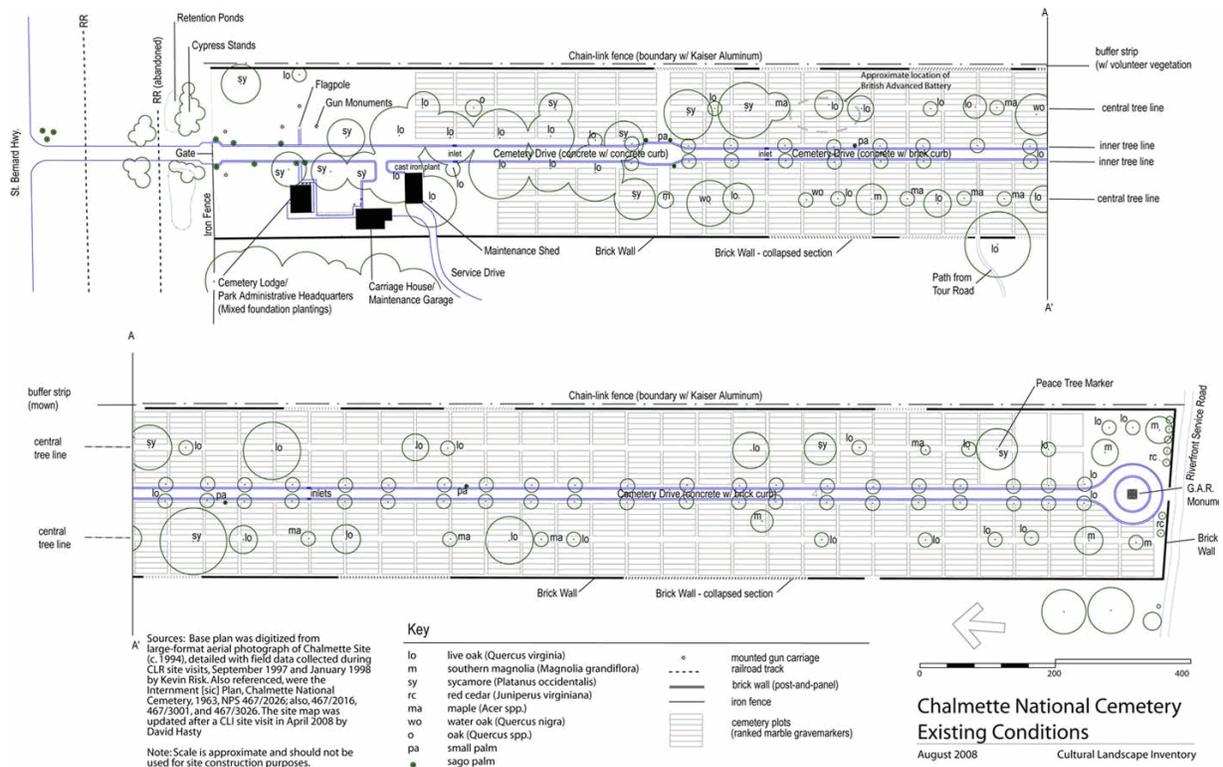


Figure 1. Chalmette National Cemetery - Existing Conditions

Property Level and CLI Numbers

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Inventory Unit Name: | Chalmette National Cemetery |
| Property Level: | Landscape |
| CLI Identification Number: | 550203 |
| Parent Landscape: | 550203 |

Park Information

| | |
|--|--|
| Park Name and Alpha Code: | Jean Lafitte NHP and Preserve - Chalmette Unit -JELA |
| Park Organization Code: | 7536 |
| Subunit/District Name Alpha Code: | Jean Lafitte NHP and Preserve - Chalmette Unit - JELA |
| Park Administrative Unit: | Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve |

CLI Hierarchy Description

Chalmette National Cemetery is the smaller of two contiguous landscapes that comprise the 142.9-acre Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. Although the cemetery occupies a portion of the ground upon which the Battle of New Orleans occurred, the 17.3-acre designed landscape is spatially distinct from the adjacent commemorative landscape of Chalmette Battlefield. Nonetheless, the cemetery and battlefield are listed together as a single historic district on the National Register of Historic Places, but they have very different developmental histories, purposes, and management regimes. For this reason, Chalmette Battlefield and Chalmette National Cemetery are treated as separate landscapes in the Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI). The cemetery has no component landscapes.

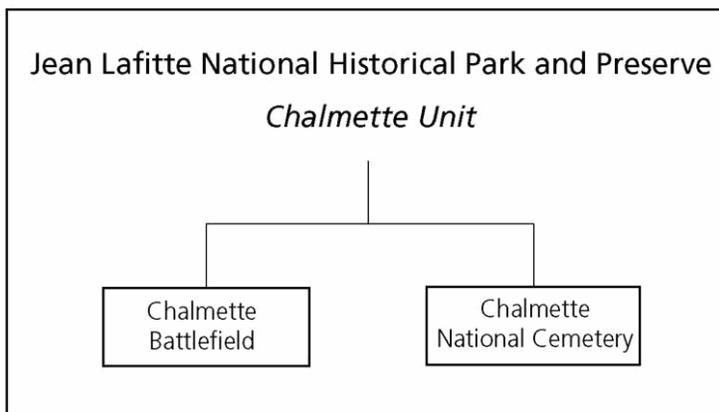


Figure 2. Chalmette Unit Cultural Landscape Inventory Hierarchy

Concurrence Status

Inventory Status: Complete

Completion Status Explanatory Narrative:

Documentation for the CLI was extracted from a CLR for Chalmette Battlefield and Chalmette National Cemetery written by Kevin Risk and completed in the fall of 1998. Several site visits were conducted during the course of the CLR research, including a systematic review of the historic park maps and archival photographs. The author also photographed the key landscape features, surveyed the vegetation, and recorded existing conditions for the battlefield. Additional research was complete in 2008 by David Hasty, including a site visit, resulting in a completed CLI. The park contacts are David Muth and Allison Pena.

Concurrence Status:

| | |
|---|--|
| Park Superintendent Concurrence: | Yes |
| Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence: | 09/18/2008 |
| National Register Concurrence: | Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination |
| Date of Concurrence Determination: | 11/05/2008 |

Concurrence Graphic Information:

Chalmette National Cemetery
Jean Lafitte NHP and Preserve - Chalmette Unit



United States Department of the Interior



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Southeast Regional Office
Atlanta Federal Center
1924 Building
100 Alabama St., SW.
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

IN REPLY REFER TO:
H22 (SERO-CRD)

25 August 2008

Patricia Duncan
Division of Historic Preservation
1051 N. Third St, Rm 402
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802-5239

Dear Ms. Duncan:

Enclosed please find a copy of the Cultural Landscape Inventories (CLI) for Chalmette Battlefield and Chalmette National Cemetery in St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana, a part of the Jean Lafitte National Historic Park and Preserve. The CLI is an evaluated list of cultural landscape properties in the National Park System considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places or that contribute to an existing historic property. In order for CLI data to become certified, National Park Service regulations require concurrence from the SHPO on the eligibility of these properties. We are requesting your review of the Chalmette Battlefield and Chalmette National Cemetery CLIs and ask that you return the concurrence form.

Chalmette National Historical Park was administratively listed as a National Register historic district in 1966. Additional documentation was accepted by the National Register in 1987 with the property renamed "Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park." The enclosed CLIs include a statement of significance, written history, analysis and evaluation of cultural landscape features, and graphic attachments that further define the historic landscape features at the property.

Based on our research, we suggest that the nomination be expanded to include significant cultural landscape features, including: the park entrance drive (c. 1938), the cemetery drive (c. 1870); and the cemetery allées (c. 1927 – present). We also suggest that the site of a small portion of the cypress swamp be removed from the list of contributing features. The existing



Letter to SHPO

Chalmette National Cemetery
Jean Lafitte NHP and Preserve - Chalmette Unit

woodland swamp is a 1960s reconstruction, and based on recent findings published in "The Search for the Lost Riverfront," edited by Ted Birkedal (2006), it is located mostly south of the battle-era cypress swamp. Finally, because they are spatially and developmentally distinct properties, we would suggest that Chalmette Battlefield and Chalmette National Cemetery be listed separately in the National Register.

With concurrence from your office, the findings become certified in the CLI database. Your concurrence also gives us justification to submit proper additional documentation to you at a future date. If you have any questions about these documents, please contact David Hasty, CLI Coordinator, Southeast Region (SER), at (404) 562-3117 extension 630 or by e-mail at david_hasty@nps.gov. The concurrence form can be returned by fax at (404) 562-3202, or mailed to the address above.

We greatly appreciate your office's assistance with the project.

Sincerely,



Dan Scheidt
Chief, Cultural Resource Division
Southeast Region

Enclosures

We have reviewed the submitted documentation that identifies cultural landscape features at the Chalmette Battlefield and Chalmette National Cemetery at Jean Lafitte National Historic Park and Preserve. We concur with the findings of the Cultural Landscape Inventory and understand that these features contribute to the existing National Register of Historic Places nomination for Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park.



Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation Representative

11-5-08
Date

2nd page of letter to SHPO & SHPO Signature of Concurrence

Chalmette National Cemetery
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United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Southeast Regional Office
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Atlanta, Georgia 30303



H22(SERO-CRD)

25 August 2008

Memorandum

To: Superintendent, Jean Lafitte NHP & Preserve
From: Chief, Cultural Resources Division, Southeast Region
Subject: Cultural Landscape Inventory

We are pleased to transmit to you the Chalmette Battlefield and Chalmette National Cemetery Cultural Landscape Inventories (CLI). The CLI is an evaluated list of landscape properties in the National Park System eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NR) or that contribute to an existing historic property. These CLIs were produced using data from the Chalmette Cultural Landscape Report (CLR), a site visit to the park in April 2008, and archival research at the Southeast Regional Office and the park.

In order for the CLIs to be certified and counted in PMDS under JELA's goal Ia7 and the systemwide goal 1b2B, the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office needs to concur on the eligibility of the identified contributing cultural landscape features to the existing nomination. The Chalmette Unit is listed on the National Register, but the cultural landscape features are inadequately documented. David Hasty, CLI Coordinator for the Southeast Region, will send a request to the Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation for concurrence on the CLI findings.

Approval by the park superintendent is also needed for certification. If the findings of the CLIs are agreed upon – especially regarding condition assessment and management category – please sign the attached approval form and return it to our office to the attention of David Hasty.

Enclosures



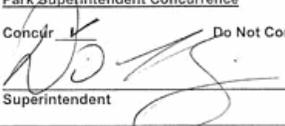
Letter to the Superintendent

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE INVENTORY
 CONDITION ASSESSMENT CONCURRENCE SHEET - 11 July 2008

Park Information
 Park: Jean Lafitte National Historic Park and Preserve
 State: Louisiana
 Counties: St. Bernard

| <u>Cultural Landscape Condition</u> | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------|-----------|
| Inventory Name | CLI ID # | Condition |
| Chalmette Battlefield | 550111 | Fair |
| Chalmette National Cemetery | 550203 | Poor |

Cultural Landscape Management Category
 Should Be Preserved and Maintained 18 August 2008

Park Superintendent Concurrence
 Concur Do Not Concur

 Superintendent Date 9/18/08

Superintendent Signature of Concurrence

Geographic Information & Location Map

Inventory Unit Boundary Description:

Chalmette National Cemetery is located in Chalmette, Louisiana, approximately six miles southeast of downtown New Orleans. The 17.3-acre property is bounded to the south by the Mississippi River and its adjacent levee, which is maintained and administered by the Army Corps of Engineers. To the north, an approximately 200-foot wide strip, containing highway, railroad, and several gas line rights-of-way,

Chalmette National Cemetery
Jean Lafitte NHP and Preserve - Chalmette Unit

separates the cemetery from the St. Bernard Highway (LA Highway 46). The Norfolk Southern Railroad line runs along this right-of-way just north of cemetery boundaries. The cemetery is bounded to the east by the former Kaiser Aluminum and Chemical Corporation's processing plant, and to the west, by Chalmette Battlefield. The boundary UTMs listed are those for the entire Chalmette Unit, which includes both Chalmette National Cemetery and Chalmette Battlefield.

State and County:

State: LA
County: St. Bernard Parish

Size (Acres): 17.30

Boundary UTMS:

| | |
|----------------------|-----------|
| UTM Zone: | 16 |
| UTM Easting: | 210,850 |
| UTM Northing: | 3,315,790 |
| UTM Zone: | 16 |
| UTM Easting: | 244,780 |
| UTM Northing: | 3,316,170 |
| UTM Zone: | 16 |
| UTM Easting: | 211,200 |
| UTM Northing: | 3,316,460 |
| UTM Zone: | 16 |
| UTM Easting: | 211,420 |
| UTM Northing: | 3,315,420 |

Location Map:

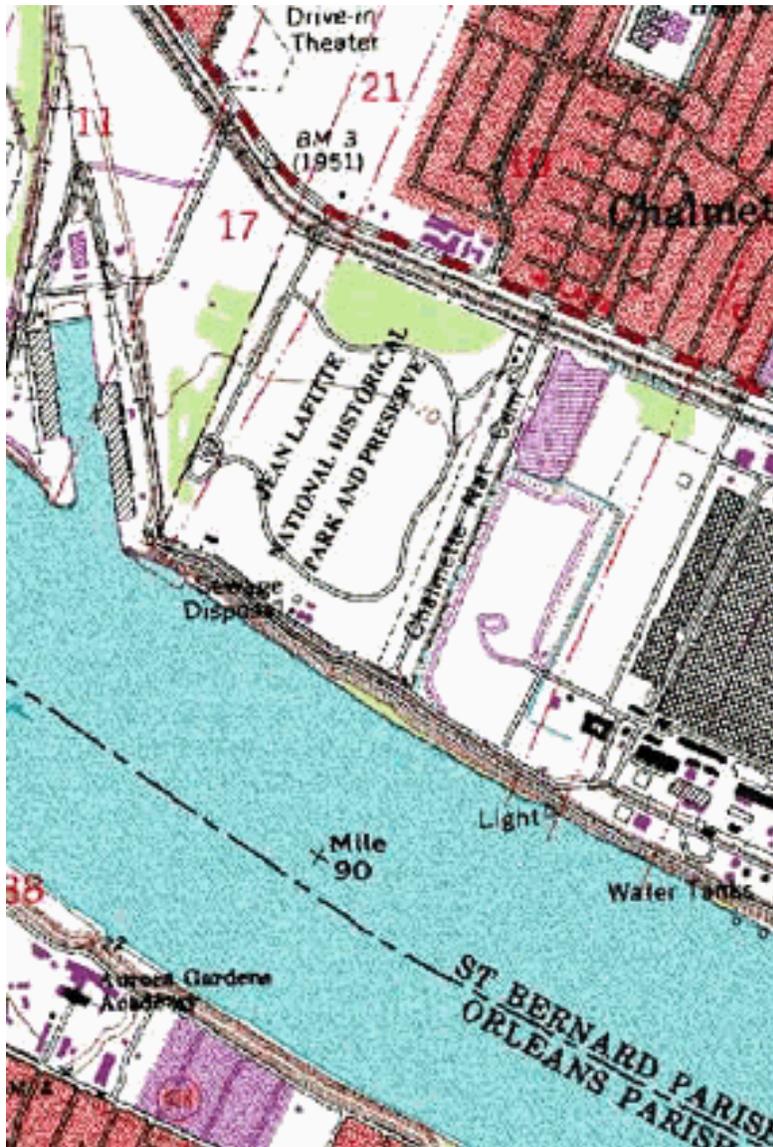


Figure 3. Cropped image of USGS 1:24000 quadrangle - Chalmette, LA 1967; revised 1994)

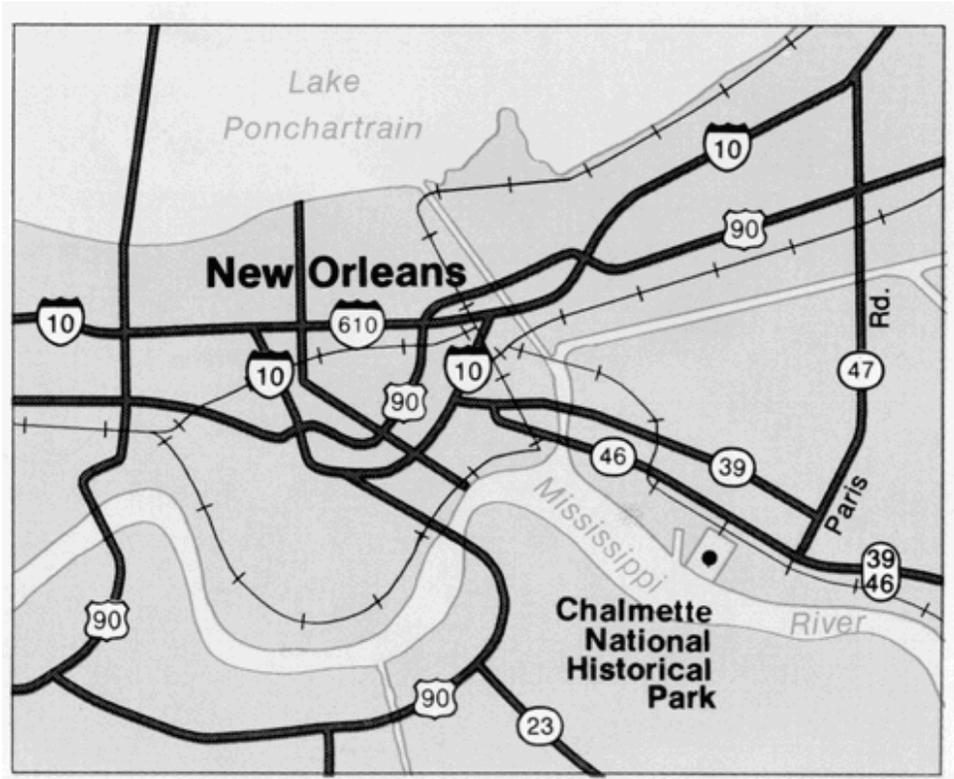


Figure 4. Regional location of the Chalmette Unit of JELA, formerly Chalmette National Historical Park

Regional Context:

Type of Context: Cultural

Description:

Chalmette National Cemetery lies in a region that has been historically influenced by the intermingling of many different cultures, including American Indian, French, Spanish, African, West Indian, Canary Islander, and English.

Type of Context: Physiographic

Description:

Chalmette National Cemetery is located in the Mississippi River Delta region of Southeastern Louisiana, within the ancient alluvial fan of the Plaquemine Delta.

Type of Context: Political

Description:

Chalmette National Cemetery is located within Louisiana's 1st Congressional District, in the civil jurisdiction of St. Bernard Parish.

Management Unit: Chalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

Tract Numbers: 105-09 to 105-11 inclusive

Management Information

General Management Information

Management Category: Should be Preserved and Maintained

Management Category Date: 08/18/2008

NPS Legal Interest:

Type of Interest: Fee Simple

Public Access:

Type of Access: Unrestricted

Adjacent Lands Information

Do Adjacent Lands Contribute? No

National Register Information

Existing National Register Status

National Register Landscape Documentation:

Entered Inadequately Documented

National Register Explanatory Narrative:

Chalmette National Historical Park--a designation which included both the Chalmette National Cemetery and Chalmette Battlefield properties--was administratively listed as a National Register historic district in 1966, apparently without substantial supporting documentation.

In 1978, the park was legislatively redesignated as the Chalmette Unit of the newly created Jean Lafitte National Historical Park. Subsequently, more thorough supporting documentation was prepared for the Chalmette Unit by NPS historian Jerome Green in conjunction with a Historic Resource Study written during the mid-1980s; this additional documentation was accepted by the National Register on July, 6, 1987, and the park was renamed the "Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park" in the National Register database.

In the current documentation, the land, landscape features, and structures that compose both Chalmette National Cemetery and Chalmette Battlefield are listed under the same historic district designation, even though the cemetery and battlefield are spatially and developmentally distinct landscapes. In the author's opinion, the cemetery should have a separate National Register nomination. Additionally, the c. 1937 cemetery drive, and the live oak and sycamore allees should be listed as contributing features of the property.

Existing NRIS Information:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Name in National Register: | Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park Historic District |
| NRIS Number: | 66000889 |
| Other Names: | Chalmette National Historical Park |
| Primary Certification: | Listed In The National Register |
| Primary Certification Date: | 10/15/1966 |
| Other Certifications and Date: | Additional Documentation - 7/6/1987 |

National Register Eligibility

National Register Concurrence: Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination

Contributing/Individual: Contributing

National Register Classification: District

Significance Level: National

Significance Criteria: A - Associated with events significant to broad patterns of our history

Significance Criteria: C - Embodies distinctive construction, work of master, or high artistic values

Significance Criteria: D - Has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important to prehistory or history

Criteria Considerations: D -- A cemetery which derives its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features, or from association with historic events

Period of Significance:

Time Period: AD 1864 - 1933

Historic Context Theme: Expressing Cultural Values

Subtheme: Landscape Architecture

Facet: Rural Cemeteries

Other Facet: None

Time Period: AD 1864 - 1933

Historic Context Theme: Shaping the Political Landscape

Subtheme: The Civil War

Facet: Battles In The North And South

Other Facet: None

Area of Significance:

| | |
|--|------------------------|
| Area of Significance Category: | Military |
| Area of Significance Subcategory: | None |
| Area of Significance Category: | Landscape Architecture |
| Area of Significance Subcategory: | None |
| Area of Significance Category: | Architecture |

Statement of Significance:

Established for the interment of Union soldiers killed during the Civil War in Louisiana, Chalmette National Cemetery (or Monument Cemetery, as originally named) has obvious historical significance for its association with that nation-rending event and the memorialization efforts surrounding it. The cemetery contains over 15,000 burials, including casualties and veterans of the Civil War, Spanish-American War, World War I, and World War II, as well as a few casualties of the Vietnam War and several veterans of the War of 1812. The land of which the cemetery is sited at one time contained the graves of a number of former slaves and free black individuals, who were later disinterred and reburied in an unidentified spot just outside the western cemetery wall.

Although the cemetery stands on a portion of the former Chalmette Plantation property, its developmental origins show little explicit association with the Battle of New Orleans, the one exception being the archeological remains of the British Advanced Battery by Grave Section 143. This site is not currently interpreted, and the cemetery's rectilinear shape reflects a post-battle land division dating from after the subdivision of the St. Amand Plantation in 1832. Because of its distinct developmental origins and spatial configuration, the cemetery stands apart from the commemorative battlefield landscape, even though it has long been administratively managed as part of the larger battlefield park.

Based on the National Register criteria for the evaluation and nomination of designed historic landscapes, Chalmette National Cemetery draws significance both from its developmental association with the Civil War and from the aesthetic qualities embodied by its design and construction (War Department Era, 1864-1933). The features which contribute to the cemetery's significance include the post-and-panel brick walls, the iron cemetery gate, the cemetery lodge complex (currently park administrative headquarters and maintenance complex), the G.A.R. Monument, the gridded arrangement of grave markers, and the relic alley of trees which line the drive. Though its materials are non-historic (the focal circles were removed and the original brick curb and gutters replaced by concrete when the drive was paved), the paved drive contributes to the cemetery's overall spatial design and retains, by its setting and location, the axial line of the original shell drive.

Because they predate the cemetery, the topographic traces of the British advance battery and Center Road do not contribute to the integrity of the cemetery landscape itself. However, they are significant features in the history of the larger battlefield landscape and should be preserved and interpreted.

Chronology & Physical History

Cultural Landscape Type and Use

Cultural Landscape Type: Designed

Current and Historic Use/Function:

Primary Historic Function: Cemetery

Other Use/Function

Leisure-Passive (Park)

Other Type of Use or Function

Both Current And Historic

Current and Historic Names:

Name

Chalmette National Cemetery

Monument Cemetery

Type of Name

Both Current And Historic

Historic

Ethnographic Study Conducted: No Survey Conducted

Ethnographic Significance Description:

The cemetery at one time contained the graves of a number of former slaves and free black individuals, who were later disinterred and reburied just outside the western cemetery wall within the current boundaries of Chalmette Cemetery.

Chronology:

| Year | Event | Annotation |
|---------|----------------|---|
| AD 1718 | Established | The City of New Orleans is established. |
| AD 1817 | Purchased/Sold | Two years after the death of Lino de Chalmet, the Chalmette property is sold to brothers Hilaire and Louis St. Amand, wealthy free men of color. Hilaire and Louis St. Amand |

Chalmette National Cemetery
 Jean Lafitte NHP and Preserve - Chalmette Unit

| | | |
|----------------|----------------|--|
| AD 1832 | Purchased/Sold | The Chalmette property is subdivided and lots are sold by the St. Amand brothers to pay off debts. |
| AD 1861 - 1864 | Land Transfer | After a complicated string of land transfers, a parcel of the subdivided St. Amand land comes into the ownership of the City of New Orleans. In 1864, the City cedes the westernmost portion of the land to the US government for use as a bivouac & cemetery. |
| AD 1868 | Established | Chalmette Cemetery - originally known as National Cemetery - is established and placed under the administration of the War Department. Any Civil War earthworks, and buildings from the St. Amand era, are removed. |
| AD 1868 - 1875 | Developed | Under the War Dept., the cemetery is designed and landscaped, with burial plots in grid pattern, ornamental trees and vegetation, a central shell drive w/ circular nodes, brick walls, and an iron gate. |
| AD 1882 | Built | The local chapter of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) erected a monument to the memory of Union war dead. It is located in the central node of the cemetery drive. |
| AD 1892 | Expanded | Cemetery property is expanded with the acquisition of land between the original boundary and River Road, and the cemetery entrance is shifted south to reflect that change. |
| AD 1908 - 1909 | Altered | The Chalmette Slip is excavated, severing primary access from River Road to the cemetery. The cemetery acquires land extending north to current St. Bernard Highway, allowing for access from this direction. |
| AD 1928 - 1929 | Altered | A levee setback claims the riverfront entrance to the cemetery. The iron gate is moved to the main northern entrance, a new brick cemetery lodge and carriage house are built near it and sago palms are planted along either side of the central drive. |
| AD 1933 - 1939 | Land Transfer | The cemetery is transferred from the War Department to the National Park Service and established as Chalmette National Historical Park. |

Chalmette National Cemetery
Jean Lafitte NHP and Preserve - Chalmette Unit

| | | |
|----------------|---------------|--|
| AD 1950 - 1959 | Altered | The original shell, brick-lined cemetery drive is paved, and four of its five focal circles are removed. |
| AD 1956 | Moved | The GAR monument is moved to the terminal circle by the riverfront. |
| AD 1957 | Built | A brick maintenance shed is built by the utility court. |
| AD 1957 - 1962 | Removed | The caretaker's stable and a wooden rostrum are removed during the late 1950s - early 1960s. |
| AD 1978 | Land Transfer | Chalmette National Historical Park is incorporated into the newly created Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. |
| AD 1984 | Explored | Army COE archeologist, Tommy Ryan, notes a low, broad mound in the cemetery during monitoring. The conclusion is that it is the remains of the British advanced battery. |
| AD 2005 | Damaged | Chalmette Cemetery is damaged by Hurricane Katrina. The Lodge, Carriage House, and Maintenance Shed are all flooded. The cemetery itself is flooded, impacting the markers, causing several of the mature trees to die, and precipitating the collapse of several sections of the cemetery wall. |
| AD 2006 - 2008 | Rehabilitated | In the years since Katrina, the park has been in the process of repairing the damage at the cemetery. |
| AD 2007 | Rehabilitated | Live oaks are replanted, especially along the inner allee line by the cemetery drive (a treatment prescribed in the CLR). |

Physical History:

1864-present

Chalmette National Cemetery is located on land that belonged, successively, to the battle-era Chalmette Plantation and, later, the St. Amand Plantation. The City of New Orleans acquired this land in 1861, after a series of subdivisions of the St. Amand holdings. During the Civil War, a portion of the land was occupied by a line of Confederate earthworks, constructed to protect the City of New Orleans from attack along the Mississippi River. In 1864, the city ceded a thirteen and one-half acre tract of this land to the U. S. Government for use as a cemetery. The earthworks that extended onto the property and any buildings remaining from the St. Amand occupation were removed during the cemetery's early development by the War Department.

Under War Department administration, the cemetery was developed and landscaped in keeping with other national cemeteries established during this era. Burial plots were laid out in square sections separated by a gridded pattern of shell pathways, and ornamental trees and vegetation were added for embellishment. A central shell drive with a series of five nodes along its length was constructed. During the nineteenth century, a brick receiving vault stood in the northernmost circle of this drive. A caretaker's residence and dependency structures were built at the cemetery's southern end. Segmented brick walls were constructed along the east and west boundaries in 1873, and a decorative iron gate was erected at the south entrance around 1875. In 1882, the local chapter of the Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.), a veteran's group, erected a monument to the memory of Union war dead in the central node of the cemetery drive.

In 1892, the cemetery was expanded by the acquisition of land at its southern end, and the entrance was moved to reflect this change. At this time, a new caretaker's residence and stable were constructed near the Levee Road. Around 1909, the Levee Road was closed and the cemetery acquired the land extending north to the current St. Bernard Highway, necessitating the establishment of a northern entrance to the cemetery. In 1928, a levee setback finally claimed the riverfront entrance and the existing caretaker's house. The iron cemetery gates were probably moved from the riverfront entrance to the new main northern entrance at this time. A new brick cemetery lodge and carriage house were built in the northwestern portion of the cemetery in 1929. Sago palms (*Cycas revoluta*) were planted on either side of the central drive extending to the lodge complex, and additional ornamental plantings were established around the lodge itself.

The central drive, which was originally surfaced with shell and edged with a brick curb and gutters, was paved in the mid- 1950s. At this time, four of the five circles that had served as focal nodes along the drive--one of which had featured a flagpole--were removed. In 1956, the G.A.R. Monument was relocated from its position in the center of the cemetery drive to a new location in a terminal circle at the riverfront end. The flagpole was relocated to a park-like setting across the drive from the cemetery lodge building and flanked by a set of mounted gun carriages. Another set of mounted gun carriages, which once ornamented the riverfront entrance of the cemetery, were moved to a location just inside the iron gates at the St. Bernard

Highway entrance. The caretaker's stable and a wooden rostrum, which served as a staging platform for official ceremonies and commemorative events, stood in the southeastern portion of the cemetery until the 1950s, when they were removed.

Though records suggest that trees were planted in a rather piecemeal fashion at various times during the cemetery's early history, evidence indicates that an allee of sycamores was established in 1927. Early photographs and plans show six more-or-less parallel rows of tree plantings within the cemetery (figure 5): one row just inside both the east and west walls, one lining either side of the central drive, and one along each of the medial axes, approximately halfway between the central drive and the cemetery walls, where the spacing of the grave markers is deliberately wider to accommodate such planting (figure 6). Two major storms--Hurricane Betsy in September 1965 and Hurricane Camille in August 1969--did significant damage to the cemetery's trees. It appears that many trees were lost or damaged during these storms; these trees were never systematically replaced, though a replacement plan was devised.

A third, more recent storm, Hurricane Katrina, caused significant damage at the property in 2005. The Cemetery Lodge, Carriage House, and Maintenance Shed were all flooded. The cemetery itself was flooded, damaging many of the mature trees, and causing some of them to die. The flooding also impacted the cemetery markers with heaving (figure 7), and caused the less stable portions of the cemetery wall to collapse (figure 8). Since that time, the park has been in the process of repairing the damage. The buildings are stabilized, but the cemetery wall is still collapsed, and some markers are shifted. While many trees were damaged by this hurricane, the park is pruning the surviving ones, and has planted a significant number of young live oaks, particularly along the allee that borders the cemetery drive.



Figure 5. Chalmette National Cemetery, aerial view from south, c. 1960



Figure 6. Rows of gravestones and tree plantings, c. 1930s



Figure 7. Cemetery markers and a section of collapsed wall, April 2008.



Figure 8. Cemetery collapsed wall, April 2008.

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

As a designed landscape that evolved over a period of many years, Chalmette National Cemetery possesses qualities of design, workmanship, and materials that must be holistically examined in order to determine the integrity of the existing landscape. Although the design features that most strongly characterize the present cemetery were acquired or constructed over a nearly seventy-year period (1864-1930), they contribute to an overall coherence of spatial intent that relates to the cemetery's origins. The earliest cemetery plans, in fact, convey a spatial design that bears obvious resemblance to the current cemetery layout: a narrow linear configuration that was determined as much by the pre-existing land divisions as by overt design intent.

Location--

The cemetery is located on land that belonged, successively, to the battle-era Chalmette Plantation and, later, the St. Amand Plantation. The City of New Orleans acquired this land in 1861, after a series of subdivisions of the St. Amand holdings. During the Civil War, a portion of the land was occupied by a line of Confederate earthworks, constructed to protect the City of New Orleans from attack along the Mississippi River. In 1864, the city ceded a thirteen and one-half acre tract of this land to the U. S. Government for use as a cemetery. The present 17.3-acre cemetery contains most of the original acreage that was set aside for wartime burial, plus additional land that was acquired to the north when the St. Bernard Highway was constructed. A small piece of land at the cemetery's south end, including the riverfront entrance, was lost to a 1928 levee setback. However, the cemetery has maintained a characteristic 250- foot width since its establishment; only the length has changed, from the original dimension of 2375 feet to the current measurement of nearly 2800 feet.

Design--

The cemetery's formal plantings, its array of War Department-era features, its gridded arrangement of grave markers, and its roughly symmetrical layout--rectilinear, bisected by a central drive with terminal roundabout at the southern end--clearly mark it as a designed landscape. Though the northern and southern boundary limits have changed slightly over time, the distinctive linear layout and the post-and-panel brick walls that enclose the cemetery have been defining characteristics since the late nineteenth century (figure 9). The remnant allee of trees along the drive and the gridded arrangement of grave markers further contribute to the overtly patterned character of the cemetery's landscape, representing design elements that were introduced in the late nineteenth century. Except for a short section of sycamores and live oaks lining the drive from the entrance gates to a point just south of the lodge complex, only the two medial rows of sycamores and oaks remain today, and these are gap-toothed, due to tree losses at the southern end of the cemetery. The cemetery lodge complex represents a design element common to many national cemeteries; its presence contributes to the cemetery's overall spatial design.

Setting--

Like the commemorative battlefield, the cemetery has experienced significant alterations to its once

rural setting and context due to industrialization of the neighboring properties. The presence of the Kaiser Aluminum plant to the east represents the most significant alteration to the cemetery's original setting, and is a jarring visual and olfactory intrusion in this contemplative landscape (figure 10). Twentieth-century levee setbacks have claimed the original riverfront entrance to the cemetery and have severed any visual or spatial connection to the Mississippi River at the southern end. The construction of the St. Bernard Highway to the north permanently altered the cemetery's original riverfront orientation. As for vegetation, early photographs show a shadier, more verdant cemetery than presently exists (figure). In fact, many of the trees in the southern portion of the cemetery have been lost to storms, disease, or stress, leaving that end of the cemetery visually exposed to both the Kaiser Aluminum plant to the east and the battlefield park to the west. The relative lack of planting along the northern boundary fence allows objectionable views of commercial and residential development across the St. Bernard Highway.

Materials--

The walls of brick that enclose the cemetery on three sides introduce a material motif that contributes to the cemetery's overall spatial coherence; they are also a typical design feature of many early national cemeteries. Though constructed at a much later date than the walls, the cemetery lodge complex repeats the use of brick, establishing a material link with the earlier wall construction. Marble is another historically significant material that is repeated throughout the cemetery, in the low rows of grave markers that pattern the landscape. Some of the tree species mentioned in early inspection reports of the cemetery are still present, notably magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*) and a few cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) and arbor vitae (*Thuja occidentalis*). Several specimens of a sycamore allee planted in 1927 still line the drive near the entrance gate and the medial axes at the southern end of the cemetery. The cemetery also contains a partial allee of old live oaks lining the drive near the lodge. For reasons unknown, the ornamental shrubs and herbaceous garden plants--roses, spiraea, viburnums, pittosporum--mentioned in early cemetery records are no longer present.

Workmanship--

The brick post-and-panel walls (1873), which surround the cemetery on three sides, are stately examples of the nineteenth-century workmanship that was employed to embellish the early cemetery. The decorative iron gates (c. 1875), too, though they have been moved from their original position at the riverfront entrance to their current position at the St. Bernard Highway entrance, are reminders of an earlier era in the cemetery's history and represent a level of craftsmanship that is rarely seen today. The cemetery lodge, carriage house, and maintenance shed, though not exceptional in design, do epitomize a standard of workmanship that was characteristic of the War Department's administration of the national cemeteries, most of which have similar structures. Early documents confirm a range of ornamental species planted within the cemetery, but much of the cemetery's planted vegetation has suffered deterioration over the years. Some of the trees, particularly the sycamores, are in need of replacement due to disease or stress.

Feeling--

Although the cemetery stands apart in atmosphere from the larger battlefield park, the significant loss of a mature tree canopy in the southern portion of the cemetery has disrupted the more contemplative

and shady character still felt at the northern end. The southern portion of the cemetery feels, in fact, rather exposed and barren, primarily due to the looming industrial presence of the Kaiser Aluminum plant's waste site along the eastern boundary. The northern portion of the cemetery, near the entrance and cemetery lodge, retains a more consistent tree canopy; its shadier, tunnel-like atmosphere is more in keeping with the desired design character.

Association--

The cemetery is significant not only for its developmental association with the Civil War but also because it contains veterans and casualties of many later wars in which the United States was involved. The cemetery remained open for burials until 1945. In addition, the cemetery is significant for its design lineage. With its distinctive linear layout, its stately brick walls, and its central drive, the cemetery is a unique and site-responsive example of the national cemetery as conceived and designed by the War Department administration (1868-1933).

Landscape Characteristic:

Spatial Organization

The National Cemetery is clearly defined as a separate landscape within the larger park, both by its consciously designed layout and by the brick-walled enclosure that sets it apart from the commemorative battlefield. Some 2,800 feet in length from north to south and 250 feet from east to west, the cemetery is an essentially linear landscape, characterized by north-south rows of grave markers, a central drive with a circular roundabout at the southern end, partial allées of sycamore, live oak, and magnolia, and the distinctive post-and-panel brick walls that define the eastern, southern, and western boundaries. Though the original riverfront entrance has been lost to levee setbacks, the linear north-south spatial configuration has remained a distinguishing feature since the cemetery's establishment. A gated opening in the southern cemetery wall provides access to the riverfront service road and serves as a reminder of the cemetery's former riverfront orientation (figure 11). The park has also opened a section of the western wall to accommodate a path that provides pedestrian access to the cemetery from the battlefield tour road. A bifurcated mound discovered in the northeastern portion of the cemetery during a 1984 survey is very likely the remains of the British advanced battery from the Battle of New Orleans; and the perceptibly linear alignment of earth that extends from this mound across the battlefield to the west, the remains of Center Road.

Cemetery drive

The cemetery is accessed at the northern end by an entrance drive--officially denoted as Military Cemetery Road--that leads from St. Bernard Highway. Like the main park entrance, this drive is impacted by industrial and commercial development along the highway, most notably by the towering smokestack of the Kaiser Aluminum plant to the east and by the utility and railroad rights-of-way that must be crossed to enter the cemetery. Cypress trees grow by the culverts that flank the entry. A graveled area just outside the northern boundary fence, on an abandoned railroad embankment, provides provisional parking for local citizens who use the cemetery drive and park tour road for recreation, primarily after park closing hours. The elaborate iron entrance gate (figure 12), a feature from the early War Department years at

Chalmette, establishes a memorable and ceremonial entrance point to the cemetery.

Passing through the iron gate, the entrance drive runs the length of the cemetery, terminating in a paved roundabout at the southern end. The G.A.R. Monument stands on a grassy mound at the center of this roundabout, the focal point of the entrance drive (figure 13). The drive's surface is recessed in relationship to the ground level in order to accommodate the backwards (river-to-backswamp) drainage gradient that is characteristic of properties along the river. Furthermore, the road is crowned in the center, allowing storm water to run off into the curbed concrete gutters that edge either side. Although the drive can narrowly accommodate two-way traffic, an elliptical widening of the drive in the cemetery's northern third provides a pull-off and assures a comfortable passing point for oversized vehicles. A partial allée of sycamores and live oaks lines the northern end of the drive, continuing with recent plantings along the southern portion of the cemetery drive.

Cemetery Lodge/Park administrative headquarters and maintenance complex

The park administrative office (figure 14), housed in the 1920s-era brick cemetery lodge, is located southwest of the cemetery entrance gate. The lodge building is sited in a cluster arrangement with a detached brick carriage house, which serves as the maintenance garage and office (figure 15), and an open brick maintenance shed, which serves as vehicle storage, to the south-southwest. A small paved utility court just south of the headquarters provides parking for the administrative and maintenance staff who work in this area. To the east, the utility court connects to the cemetery entrance drive. A short service drive leads from the west edge of the utility court to the battlefield tour road, passing through a security-gated opening that the park has created in the western cemetery wall. The grassy area just outside the cemetery wall, which is visible from the extreme southern end of the battlefield, appears to be used as a provisional maintenance yard and storage area for lawn mowers and other equipment. Cypress trees were recently planted near the service drive on the battlefield side, and help buffer this view.

The grounds around the brick lodge building are maintained in closely mown turf. A few ornamental shrubs have been planted along the building's foundation. Concrete paths lead from the entrance drive to the lodge's east-facing front porch, from the utility court to the front porch, and from the garage and utility court to the lodge's rear entrance. Apart from the sycamores that line the cemetery drive, only a few trees, including a large magnolia, stand in the yard surrounding the lodge and along the northern boundary fence. In fact, the area to the north of the lodge has an unbuffered view through the iron boundary fence of residential and commercial development across the St. Bernard Highway. There is also an inadequate vegetative buffer to the south of the vehicular maintenance shed, whose rear wall is highly visible from within the middle third of the cemetery. Across the entrance drive from the lodge's front walkway, a similar walkway leads to a flagpole set in a small park-like area containing mounted artillery tubes and a park bench (figure 16). Vertically-mounted artillery tubes also flank either side of the entrance drive just inside the cemetery gate. There are no grave

markers in the northernmost portion of the cemetery.

Vegetation and vegetation management

The northern third of the cemetery has a shady, almost tunnel-like atmosphere due to the number of mature sycamore and live oak trees that overhang the entrance drive from either side (figure 17). An irregular procession of sago palms (*Cycas revoluta*) lines the drive to its intersection point with the utility court, some 200 feet inside the gate, though many of these perished during Katrina. Especially noteworthy is a partial allée of mature live oaks that lines the drive for some 300 feet, from a point just beyond the utility court entrance. The southern two-thirds of the drive is more open due to a gap-toothed, fragmented pattern of tree planting that is also offset a greater distance from the drive than in the northern third of the cemetery. Many of the trees in the southern portion of the cemetery--primarily live oak, sycamore, and magnolia--appear to have suffered storm damage or environmental stress, especially the sycamores, many of which have severely lopped limbs and branches. Borer holes are also apparent in some of the sycamore specimens. While still quite small, the recently-planted live oaks will eventually grow large enough to continue the feeling of the allée to the southern portion of the cemetery. But for now, the lack of a consistent tree canopy in the southern end of the cemetery opens undesirable viewlines of the Kaiser plant to the east, both from within the cemetery itself and also from within the larger park; it also leaves the cemetery visually open to the battlefield along its western boundary.

The cemetery is maintained exclusively in mown turf, although the more visited northern end, near the administrative headquarters, seems to receive a slightly more manicured treatment. Because the ground in the cemetery is hummocky and dotted with low, closely-spaced grave markers, achieving a uniformly manicured appearance requires significant mowing with a string-trimmer. At the southern end of the cemetery, an approximately 8-foot-wide strip of mown turf, maintained by the park, separates the eastern cemetery wall from a chain-link fence that marks the edge of the Kaiser Aluminum property. No vegetative buffer has been established along the chain-link fence, even though the open view of the Kaiser site to the east disturbs the cemetery's potentially meditative setting. At the northern end of this strip, a volunteer screen of small trees and brushy vegetation buffers the cemetery from a large retention pond on the Kaiser property.

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 9. Cemetery wall, April 2008.



Figure 10. Cemetery markers and collapsed wall, with industrial development in the background.



Figure 11. G.A.R. Monument, gate and cemetery drive roundabout, April 2008.



Figure 12. Iron entrance gate to Chalmette National Cemetery with a glimpse of cemetery lodge/park administrative headquarters in background.



Figure 13. Cemetery lodge/park administrative headquarters viewed from northeast. Note foundation plantings and sago palms along drive [foreground].



Figure 14. Carriage house/maintenance garage [center], utility court, and vehicle storage shed [left, beneath trees].



Figure 15. Cemetery flagpole and mounted artillery tubes, April 2008.



Figure 16. Live oak allees and sago palms along cemetery drive near lodge complex.

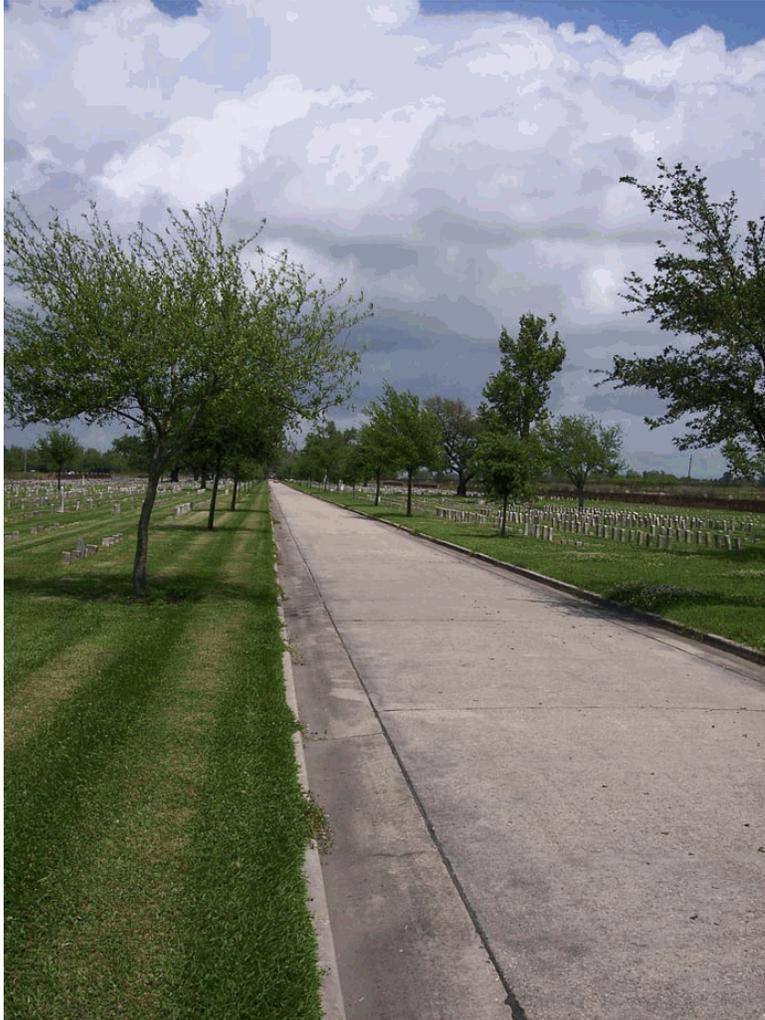


Figure 17. Young oaks along cemetery drive.

Small Scale Features

Character-defining Features:

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Feature: | Tablet Headstones |
| Feature Identification Number: | 95926 |
| Type of Feature Contribution: | Contributing |
| IDLCS Number: | 64953 |

Chalmette National Cemetery
Jean Lafitte NHP and Preserve - Chalmette Unit

LCS Structure Name: Chalmette National Cemetery Markers

LCS Structure Number: 5

Feature: The Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) Monument

Feature Identification Number: 93712

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 64954

LCS Structure Name: Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) Monument

LCS Structure Number: 6

Feature: Mounted Gun Carriages

Feature Identification Number: 131034

Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined

Feature: Flagpole

Feature Identification Number: 131036

Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined

Vegetation

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Sago Palms

Feature Identification Number: 131038

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Partial live oak and sycamore allees

Feature Identification Number: 95927

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Buildings and Structures

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Chalmette National Cemetery Gates

Feature Identification Number: 131012

Chalmette National Cemetery
Jean Lafitte NHP and Preserve - Chalmette Unit

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 64958
LCS Structure Name: Chalmette National Cemetery Gates
LCS Structure Number: CNC-08

Feature: Superintendent's Lodge

Feature Identification Number: 95924

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 64956

LCS Structure Name: Superintendent's Lodge

LCS Structure Number: BHQ

Feature: Carriage House

Feature Identification Number: 95923

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 64957

LCS Structure Name: Carriage House

LCS Structure Number: BMA

Feature: Chalmette National Cemetery Walls

Feature Identification Number: 95922

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 64965

LCS Structure Name: Chalmette National Cemetery Walls

LCS Structure Number: CNC-08

Circulation

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Cemetery Drive

Feature Identification Number: 131014

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Service Drive

Feature Identification Number: 131016
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing
Feature: Pedestrian path to Battlefield
Feature Identification Number: 131022
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Archeological Sites

Character-defining Features:

Feature: British Advance Battery
Feature Identification Number: 131040
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Views and Vistas

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Vista along inner cemetery allee
Feature Identification Number: 131042
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Condition

Condition Assessment and Impacts

Condition Assessment: Poor

Assessment Date: 08/18/2008

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

Due to effects of Hurricane Katrina, the unstable portions of the cemetery walls have collapsed. Headstone upheaval continues to be an issue, and the sycamore trees, in particular show signs of stress.

Condition Assessment: Fair

Assessment Date: 04/25/2005

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

Condition remains fair at the cemetery. Historic allees are replanted, but flooding, headstone upheaval, and cemetery wall deterioration continue.

Impacts

Type of Impact: Vegetation/Invasive Plants

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Description: Mature trees at the site, sycamores in particular, are in decline (post-Katrina pruning of live oaks, though, has been helpful).

Type of Impact: Adjacent Lands

External or Internal: External

Impact Description: The former Kaiser Aluminum processing plant and waste site loom to the east of the cemetery, significantly intruding upon the contemplative setting.

Type of Impact: Deferred Maintenance

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Description: Several sections of the cemetery wall have collapsed.

Type of Impact: Flooding

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Description: Flooding, during Katrina specifically, but also at other times of heavy rain, impact resources at the site: buildings, cemetery walls, headstones and vegetation.

Type of Impact: Planting Practices

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Description: The cemetery's allees are being replanted as prescribed in the CLR.

(From 1998: The failure to replant missing or diseased trees along the cemetery's allees has significantly impacted the cemetery's appearance and increases the obtrusiveness of the adjacent industrial land use.)

Stabilization Costs

Landscape Stabilization Cost: 39,479.00

Level of Estimate: A - Working Drawings

Cost Estimator: Park/FMSS

Landscape Stabilization Cost Explanatory Description:

Park-approved PMIS statement 99819 'Hazard Reduction Pruning of Specimen Trees in Chalmette Cemetery'

Treatment

Treatment

Approved Treatment: Rehabilitation
Approved Treatment Document: Cultural Landscape Report
Document Date: 09/29/1998
Approved Treatment Completed: No

Approved Treatment Costs

Cost Date: 09/29/1998

Landscape Approved Treatment Cost Explanatory Description:

No LCS Approved Treatment Costs exist for the site, and no approved treatment costs were provided with the CLR. Unapproved treatment costs totalling \$2,253,588 exist for the cemetery in February 2003 PMIS statement 89758 'Preserve Chalmette National Cemetery.' This Class A estimate is based on a condition assessment by Lord, Aeck and Sargent.

Bibliography and Supplemental Information

Bibliography

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- Source Name:** CRBIB
- Citation Number:** 017139
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- Citation Number:** 003385
- Citation Title:** Chalmette National Historical Park, Louisiana
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- Citation Number:** 017141
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- Citation Number:** 013518
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- Citation Number:** 003391
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- Citation Title:** Interpretive Prospectus/Chalmette Unit
- Source Name:** CRBIB
- Citation Number:** 600248

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Citation Number: 003384

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Source Name: CRBIB

Citation Number: 003381

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Source Name: CRBIB

Citation Number: 011999

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Source Name: CRBIB

Citation Number: 011995