

Oregon Historic Site Record

LOCATION AND PROPERTY NAME			
address:	11800 SE Mt Scott Blvd Portland, Multnomah County	historic name:	Willamette National Cemetery
assoc addresses:		current/other names:	
location descr:	Also located within Clackamas County	block/lot/tax lot:	
		tnwshp/rng/sect/qtr sect:	1S 2E 27
PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS			
resource type:	district	height (stories):	0.0
elig evaluation:	eligible/significant	total elig resources:	34
prim constr date:	1950	NR Status:	Individually Listed
	second date:	date indiv listed:	07/05/2016
primary orig use:	Cemetery	orig use comments:	
second orig use:		prim style comments:	
primary style:	Modern Period: Other	sec style comments:	
secondary style:		siding comments:	
primary siding:	Not Applicable	architect:	
secondary siding:		builder:	
plan type:			
comments/notes:			
DOE in 1983 from areas developed prior to and including 1983; see http://www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/willamette.asp 6-30-2015 - Property approved for listing by SACHP on October 11, 2012; federal agency (VA) never listed. DJP			
GROUPINGS / ASSOCIATIONS			
Not associated with any surveys or groupings.			
SHPO INFORMATION FOR THIS PROPERTY			
NR date listed:	07/05/2016	106 Project(s):	None
ILS survey date:		Special Assess Project(s):	None
RLS survey date:	03/25/2010	Federal Tax Project(s):	None
ARCHITECTURAL / PROPERTY DESCRIPTION			
<i>(Includes expanded description of the building/property, setting, significant landscape features, outbuildings and alterations)</i>			
<p>Willamette National Cemetery, established in 1950, is located approximately 10 miles southeast of Portland in Clackamas and Multnomah Counties, Oregon. Situated along Mt. Scott Boulevard and northwest of Lincoln Memorial Park (a private cemetery), the 307.6-acre cemetery sits on an irregular parcel. Located on the northeast foothills of Mt. Scott, the cemetery provides scenic views of four mountains, the City of Portland, and the Columbia and Willamette Rivers. The cemetery borders residential neighborhoods on the north, east and south. With burials beginning in 1951, Willamette National Cemetery, as of June 2012, contains 151, 043 interments. The total comprises 104,81 full-casket burials, 30,268 in-ground cremains and 15,894 cremains placed in six columbaria. Willamette National Cemetery has expanded eastward since its initial development and as a result, can accommodate casket and cremains until 2019 and 2030, respectively. In October 2011, the cemetery acquired a 38.2-acre site, adjacent to the southeast boundary of the cemetery, for additional expansion. As a result, the cemetery has the potential to remain open for decades to come. Only flat granite markers are used at Willamette to mark graves and thus renders the cemetery more park-like than earlier national cemeteries with their rows of upright white marble headstones.</p>			
HISTORY			
<i>(Chronological, descriptive history of the property from its construction through at least the historic period - preferably to the present)</i>			
<p>The Willamette National Cemetery, established in 1950, emerged as the first national cemetery in the Pacific Northwest. Though authorized by Congress in 1941, the cemetery's establishment was delayed by the onset of World War II. By war's end, regional authorities renewed efforts to develop the cemetery and the state of Oregon donated the necessary land in 1949. Historically referred to as the "Arlington of the West", the cemetery emerged as the third national cemetery realized following World War II, following the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Honolulu, HI) and Puerto Rico National Cemetery (Bayamon, PR). These postwar cemeteries were developed to accommodate the growing veteran population and to provide new burial space for the national cemetery system. Influenced by the lawn and memorial park movements, Army planners recognized the Willamette site's natural aesthetic qualities, allowing native trees and uninterrupted views define the cemetery. Further, the cemetery exclusively employed flat granite markers, rather than upright marble ones, emphasizing the natural beauty of the site rather than monumentation. Willamette National Cemetery is associated with the second significant period of change and expansion for the national cemetery system (1930-1950). This period encompasses the Army's final period of expansion of the national cemetery system, with Willamette National Cemetery as the last site designed by the Army before the transfer of responsibilities to the Veterans Administration (VA) in 1973. The National Park Service, as manager of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), has stated that all National Cemeteries were to be considered eligible for the NRHP "as a result of their Congressional designation as nationally significant places of burial and commemorations". In addition, cemeteries would primarily be eligible under Criterion A for their association with the military history of the United States and the history of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA). Additionally, those having artistic or architectural significance as designed landscapes or for the design of memorials, monuments, or historic buildings, may also be documented under Criterion C. Therefore, the Willamette National Cemetery is eligible for inclusion as a historic district in the NRHP and under Criterion A and C. Criteria Considerations D (a cemetery) and G (less than 50 years old or attaining significance within the past 50 years) also apply.</p>			
RESEARCH INFORMATION			
Title Records	Census Records	Property Tax Records	Local Histories
Sanborn Maps	Biographical Sources	✓ SHPO Files	Interviews
Obituaries	✓ Newspapers	State Archives	Historic Photographs
City Directories	Building Permits	State Library	
Local Library:		University Library:	
Historical Society:		Other Repository:	
Bibliography:			

Department of Veterans Affairs, National Cemetery Administration. History and Development of the National Cemetery Administration. <http://www.cem.va.gov/pdf/history.pdf> Inter-World War National Cemeteries, 1934-1941, DRAFT, National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Submission, July 2012 Martin T. Corley, Superintendent, Willamette National Cemetery to Mr. Robert John, Veterans Administration. September 27, 1974. A1-26, Box 38. Department of Memorial Affairs, National Cemetery Historical File. Records of the Veterans Administration, Record Group 15, National Archives, Washington, D.C. National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places Program. Letter from William J. Murtagh, Keeper of the National Register to State Historic Preservation Officers, August 24, 1977, regarding National Register eligibility of national cemeteries. Letter from Carol D. Shull, Chief of Registration, to Gjore J. Mollenhoff, Federal Agency Representative, Veterans Administration, June 12, 1981, regarding National Register eligibility of national cemeteries National Register Eligibility of National Cemeteries - A clarification of Policy. Available at <http://www.nps.gov/hisotry/nr/publications/policy.htm> The Oregonian, various. Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission: 1900-Present, Lawn-Park Cemeteries and Memorial Parks. Available at [http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/developmental history of pennsylvania cemeteries/1879/1900-present lawn- park cemeteries and memorial parks /280081](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/developmental%20history%20of%20pennsylvania%20cemeteries/1879/1900-present%20lawn-park%20cemeteries%20and%20memorial%20parks/280081), accessed April 19, 2011 Sloane, David Charles. The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991. Veit, Richard Francis, and Mark Nonestied New Jersey Cemeteries and Tombstones: History in the Landscape. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2008. Worpole, Ken. Last Landscapes: The Architecutre of the Cemetery in the West. London: Reaktion Books, 2003. Willamette National Cemetery, Historical Files, Portland, Oregon. Willamette National Cemetery, Photograph Collection, History Program, National Cemetery Administration. Washington, D.C. Willamette National Cemetery, Vertical File, Hisotry Program, National Cemetery Administration, Washington, D.C. Willamette National Cemetery, Construction drawings and plans, Design and Construction Service, National Cemetery Administration, Washington, D.C.