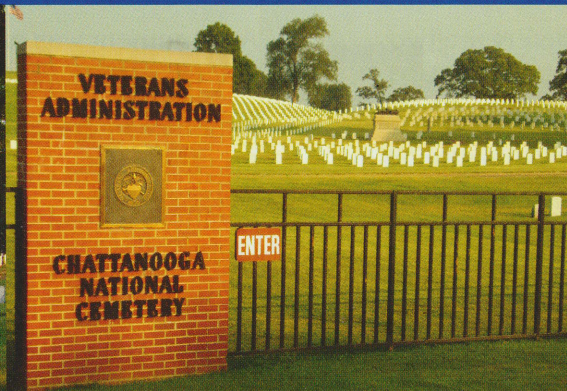


# Chattanooga National Cemetery



One of the most picturesque of America's National Cemeteries is located near the heart of the city of Chattanooga. One hundred twenty acres of gently rolling hills, landscaped meadows and intriguing rock formations surround a round knoll rising some 100 feet. Graves of over 41,000 veterans and their dependents are on the gentle slopes below a memorial area. The Chattanooga National Cemetery is a lasting tribute to the defenders of our Nation.

The original need for this cemetery was created by furious Civil War battles fought at Chickamauga, Chattanooga, Lookout Mountain, and Missionary Ridge from September to November 1863. It was established by General George H. Thomas, known to history as the "Rock of Chickamauga," in General Order No. 296, Headquarters, Army of the Cumberland, dated December 25, 1863. By 1865, more than 12,000 Union soldiers had been buried; about 5,000 were unknown. However, the cemetery at Chattanooga was not officially designated a National Cemetery until 1867 when Congress passed "An Act to Establish and Protect National Cemeteries."

A daring and famous escapade of the Civil War (recalled in the popular Disney movie "The Great Locomotive Chase") is commemorated in this cemetery. It is the story of the "General," a locomotive commandeered by James Andrews. Andrews' Raiders attempted a daring sabotage mission to destroy the rail line between Atlanta and Chattanooga.

Tried as spies, Andrews and seven of his men were hanged. Their final resting places are at the base of the monument. Four of those buried here were among the first recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor. Just inside the cemetery's main gate, atop a large granite monument, is a bronze replica of the locomotive "General." This is Ohio's tribute to the Andrews' Raiders. (Section H)

The Medal of Honor is the highest military award for bravery that can be presented to any individual by the President in the name of the Congress. There are seven Medal of Honor recipients interred within the quiet grounds of the Chattanooga National Cemetery. In 1976, to honor them, each recipient's government grave marker was replaced with a new one on which

is inscribed the words "Medal of Honor" in gold leaf. In the same year, a tulip tree was planted and a bronze plaque commemorating these brave men was installed at the tree's base. (Section P)

Over 100,000 visitors pass through the cemetery gates each year. Many are seeking and honoring burial sites of loved ones and memories of a family history. Another item of interest on each grave marker is an emblem indicating the belief of the interred. There are 48 emblems of religious belief that may appear on grave markers. Others find the quiet serenity of the grounds, with flowering and evergreen shrubs all shaded by hardwood trees, reason enough to visit. Included among the century-old trees is a 32-foot Washington Hawthorne that has been designated a National Champion. (Section M)

Passing through the cemetery, visitors often find interesting geological and historical areas that demand time for pause and reflection. There's an obviously old memorial arch on the south side of the cemetery that many believe was the original main entrance. Looking carefully, one can make out an inscription that reads, "Here rest 12,956 citizens who died for their country from 1861 to 1865." (Section

*Andrews' Raiders Monument*



# National Cemetery System

## U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs



FF/DD) On the north side of the cemetery are two fascinating limestone caves which are supposed to "communicate." These caves may have been used as receiving storage vaults for bodies awaiting burial in the early days following the Civil War. The entrance to the caves was sealed after two explorers lost their lives – supposedly from foul air in the caverns. (Section DDD)

A granite obelisk was erected in the cemetery by the Fourth Army Corps "In Memory of Our Fallen Comrades." The date remains a mystery, but it probably took place soon after the Civil War, since the names of various volunteer regiments are listed on the four sides of the monument's base. (Section B)

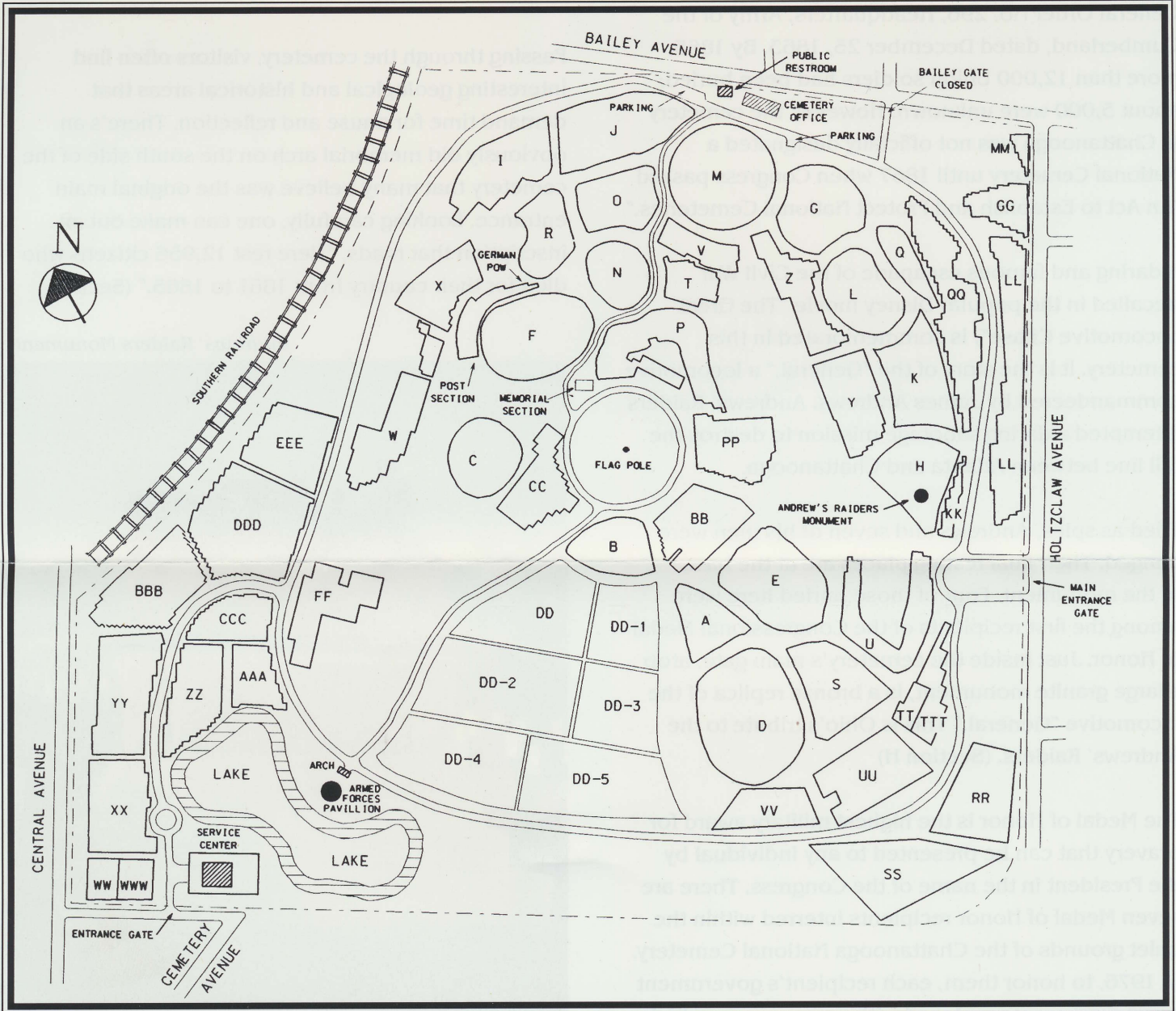
Near the cemetery's "Z" section, 'visitors should look for a mysterious footprint' embedded in rock. The formation is easily distinguished, fully an inch deep with clearly visible "toe" marks. No theories or explanations about its existence are on record.

The Circle of Honor around the Flag at the top of the hill was established in March 1992. Around the Circle, units and organizations have erected and dedicated memorials to the Military Order of the Purple Heart; Vietnam Wall Experience; 82nd Airborne Memorial – 1940 - 1992; December 7, 1941 – "A Day that Lives in Infamy" Oahu; and the Disabled American Veterans.

A monument was erected by the German government in 1935 in honor of 78 German soldiers whose military careers and lives ended in an American prisoner of war camp during the first World War. In addition, there are 108 prisoners of war from World War II interred in the same section. The Consul General, Federal Republic of Germany, Atlanta, Georgia, places a wreath on the monument each year on the German Memorial Day, the third Sunday in November. (Section X/F)

The Armed Forces Pavilion was conceived and constructed by the Chattanooga Area Veterans Council to honor present and deceased veterans; to complement the "Arch" constructed in the 1800's; to provide a proper setting for commemorative programs dedicated to those who served their country faithfully and honorably on Memorial Day; Veterans Day and other special programs.

This project was made possible by a major grant of funds from an anonymous donor, with additional funds from Hamilton County and the City of Chattanooga. The Armed Forces Pavilion was dedicated and presented to the National Cemetery System, during the Veterans Day Program, November 11, 1997.



## CHATTANOOGA NATIONAL CEMETERY

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This brochure has proudly been produced for the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and Chattanooga VA National Cemetery by the Chattanooga Area Veterans Council. Funds for the production of the brochure were provided by grants from Weldon F. Osborne Foundation, Inc.