
Office of Historic Alexandria/Alexandria Archaeology
Fort Ward Stakeholder Advisory Group
October 12, 2011
1961

Goal: Reconstruction of Northwest Bastion
1991
Goal: Investigations Beyond the Fortification
1991
Rediscovering “The Fort”
Survey of 10 acre parcel drawn for Burr Shorts in 1879
Research Continues 1990s—Web Site Postings 2000s

Maydell Belk interviewed by Alexandria Archaeology Volunteer Pat Knock
1994
2009
Goal: Inventory of Historic Resources
GIS overlay maps created to identify Known and potential resource locations.
Additional oral history interviews for information on schoolhouse/church and burial locations
Goal 1: Identify unmarked graves and test methods for locating burials through use of ground penetrating radar (GPR) and verification by traditional archaeological methods

Goal 2: Identify other potentially significant resources through traditional archaeological methods

Goal 3: Complete Stage 1 Inventory of Historic Resources
2010-2011 Goal 1: Identify Burial Locations and Test Methods

Ground Penetrating Radar Survey
Sarah Lowry, Consultant
GPR Results: 38 Possible Grave Locations
Sources of Grave Information
To Verify by Archaeological Investigation

- GPR
- Documents
  - Amanda Clark’s Will
  - 1960s City Engineer’s Drawing
  - Eagle Crest Plat
- Oral History Accounts of Grave Locations
- Gravestones
Archaeological Methods for 2010-2011 Goals 1 and 2
To Verify/Identify Graves and Other Resources

Shovel Testing

Metal Detection

Backhoe Scraping Followed by Trowel Scraping

Hand Excavation
Old Grave Yard Area
Grave Verification

GPR Finds
  Positive  21
  False    12
  Unexplored  1
Add’l Graves From Exc.  8

TOTAL BURIALS  16
Jackson Cemetery
Grave Verification

GPR Finds
- Positive: 4
- False: 2
- Other Feature: 1

TOTAL BURIALS: 4
Former Maintenance Yard Area
Grave Verification

Grove of Trees Possible Grave Locations Based on Oral Histories
6 GPR Finds—0 Positive

Amanda Clark Possible Grave Location Based on Will
0 GPR Finds—1 Feature Found

Clara and Robert Adams Graves
2 GPR Finds—2 Correct

Gravestones Moved from Area Based on Oral History
1GPR Find—Unexplored; frozen ground

GPR Finds 10
Positive 2
False 7
Unexcavated 1

TOTAL BURIALS 2
Overall Results—22 Grave Locations Identified

19 Unmarked
3 With Gravestones

Verification of GPR Grave Locations

Percentage of Positive and False GPR Finds

Total GPR Finds Excavated 36
Positives 14 39%
False 22 61%
# Recommendations for Use of GPR

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<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>GPR has limited use. It is not 100% accurate and results in both false positives and false negatives. Results vary dependent upon conditions. (39% overall accuracy; 57% in Jackson; 40% in Old Grave Yard; 20% in former maintenance yard)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>GPR should not be used in wooded areas; tree roots cause false positives.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>GPR may be useful as a first step in known cemetery areas, but verification by excavation is necessary.</td>
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Verification of Other Sources of Grave Information

Documents:
- Graves found in Jackson Cemetery location as shown on Eagle Crest plat.
- Graves found outside of both Old Grave Yard and Jackson Cemetery boundaries as shown on 1960s Engineering Drawing; boundary determinations needed
- Feature found in location of Amanda Clark’s desired burial location; needs additional excavation

Oral History:
- GPR find to south of school church unexplored; needs additional excavation
- Robert Adams grave confirmed north of Clara Adams
- Graves present in Jackson cemetery
- No graves found to date in grove area north and east of the school/church; none associated with GPR finds; none in archaeological excavations; not all areas investigated

Gravestones:
- Virginia Fitzhugh, W. Javins, and Clara Adams burial locations confirmed in alignment to the east of their gravestones
Recommendations for Other Sources of Grave Locations

Documents:
• Continue research to examine all deeds and other records

Oral History:
• Continue to interview individuals familiar with Fort Ward

Gravestones:
• No additional work. Only three gravestones in original locations
2010-2011 Goal 2: Locate and Identify Other Potentially Significant Resources

Excavation Results

Shorts Lot: Concentration of artifacts on western side; piers and foundations of chimney

School/Church/Home: Concentration of artifacts; cinder block foundation of addition

“Privy” in southwest corner

Artifacts associated with Civil War and late 19th-mid-20th century
Shorts’ Lot Excavations

House
Goal 1: Complete historical research & oral history; write history report.

Goal 2: Identify graves & boundaries of Jackson Cemetery and Old Graveyard with machine & hand excavation methods.

Goal 3: Identify resource areas in park by conducting archaeological survey (shovel test pits (STPs), hand-excavated units etc.)

Survey includes:
- Re-investigation of Amanda Clark “grave” area given Stage 1 findings.
- Investigation of area south of school/church which once had gravestones (not complete in Stage 1).
- STPs in areas of Indian, Civil War, and African-American resources using a sampling strategy based upon GIS overlays, oral histories, documents, photographs.
- Investigation of additional grave areas based upon new oral histories and documentary sources.
- Additional investigation of school/church (west side) and Shorts home lot (if funds left from above).

Goal 4: Produce Stage 2 Archaeology Report with recommendations for further work.

Goal 5: Update Cultural Resource Inventory to delineate Resource/Sensitivity Areas & outline stewardship needs.
Stage 2B--Interim Drainage Project
Archaeology Stage 2/Interim Drainage

Goal 1: Identify graves and resources in proposed drainage alignment to insure protection.

Goal 2: Inform drainage plan so changes made to protect graves and resources
Archaeology Stage 2B Drainage/Interim Plan Results

½ coffin discovered under and near park access road
• Grave was not dug as deeply as those in Old Graveyard
• Grave probably cut into by park road post-1980
• Hexagonal coffin shape, but date of burial unknown

1 Dog burial discovered—unknown date

Total Human Graves Discovered to Date 23
### Status: Archaeology Stage 1

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<tr>
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### Status: Archaeology Stage 2A

No funds expended $75,000
### Status: Archaeology Stage 2B—Drainage Improvements

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