

VA



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VA Dedicates New Cape Canaveral National Cemetery

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) held a dedication ceremony today in Scottsmeer, Florida for the new Cape Canaveral National Cemetery.

“We gather here in gratitude for all those who have served our nation in uniform,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert A. McDonald. “Here, we dedicate a new place in their honor: a place that reflects our gratitude, our love, and our devotion for their having done their duty.”

McDonald provided the keynote address and was joined by Interim Under Secretary of Veterans Affairs Ronald E. Walters, Cape Canaveral National Cemetery Director Don Murphy and elected officials as the dedication plaque was unveiled. Military honors included a firing detail by the Florida Army National Guard, Military Honors Team. Music was provided by 13th Army Band, Florida Army National Guard and singing of the National Anthem by the Navy Band Southeast.

The new 318-acre cemetery will serve the burial needs of more than 163,000 Veterans in the cemetery’s service area for the next 100 years. The VA purchased the land for the cemetery in July 2012 for \$2.1 million. The property is located along U.S. Highway 1 in northern Brevard County, approximately two miles south from Interstate 95, Exit #231, and approximately 12 miles north of Titusville, Florida.

VA awarded a construction contract September 30, 2014 to G&C Fab-Con, LLC. The company completed an early turn-over portion of the west side of the property along U.S. Highway 1 which will be used for in-ground casket and cremation interments as early as January 2015. This phase of construction is anticipated to provide burial options for 10 years.

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New Cape Canaveral National Cemetery

In addition to gravesites and columbaria, the cemetery will include other features such as a front entrance on U.S. Highway 1, a public information center with an electronic gravesite locator and restrooms, an administration building, a maintenance building, a flagpole assembly area, a memorial wall with ossuary and walkway, and committal shelters. Other cemetery infrastructure features will include roads, landscaping, utilities, and irrigation.

NCA owes its origins to the Civil War, as does the Signal Corps, U.S. Army. Airborne communication of military information started with “air telegraphy,” balloons, and Zeppelins before World War I. In the twentieth century, service members piloting fixed-wing aircraft, helicopters, and supersonic jets ushered in the U.S. space program. Learn more about notable aviators interred in VA national cemeteries at www.cem.va.gov/cem/history/index.asp.

Burial in a national cemetery is open to all members of the armed forces who have met a minimum active duty service requirement and were discharged under conditions other than dishonorable. A Veteran’s spouse, widow or widower, minor dependent children, and under certain conditions, unmarried adult children with disabilities may also be eligible for burial. Eligible spouses and children may be buried even if they predecease the Veteran. Members of the reserve components of the armed forces who die while on active duty or who die while on training duty, or were eligible for retired pay, may also be eligible for burial.

In the midst of the largest expansion since the Civil War, VA operates 133 national cemeteries and 33 soldiers’ lots and monuments sites in 40 states and Puerto Rico. More than 4 million Americans, including Veterans of every U.S. war and conflict, are buried in VA’s national cemeteries. VA also provides funding to establish, expand, improve and maintain 95 Veterans cemeteries in 47 states and territories including tribal trust lands, Guam, and Saipan. For Veterans not buried in a VA national cemetery, VA provides headstones, markers, or medallions for placement in private cemeteries. In 2014, VA honored more than 356,000 Veterans and their loved ones with memorial benefits in national, state, tribal, and private cemeteries.

For information on VA burial benefits, visit www.cem.va.gov or call (800) 827-1000.

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