

## HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY

### BEVERLY NATIONAL CEMETERY, ROSTRUM

HALS No. NJ-2-B

**Location:** 916 Bridgeboro Road, Beverly, Burlington County, New Jersey

The Beverly National Cemetery rostrum is located at latitude 40.055231, longitude -74.918275 (North American Datum of 1983). The coordinate represents the structure's southwest corner.

**Present owner:** National Cemetery Administration,  
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

**Construction date:** 1937

**Builder / Contractor:** M. B. Lewis Company, Mount Holly, New Jersey

**Description:** The Beverly rostrum is a raised, symmetrical, open-air speaker's platform shaded by a pedimented, side-gable roof. The platform sits atop concrete foundations and is made of reinforced concrete faced with buff brick laid in running bond. A course of limestone blocks runs between the brick facing and the ground, and another course of limestone provides coping around the platform's concrete floor. Two staircases, made of limestone blocks set on concrete supports with brick facing, lead onto the platform at either end. A 3'-high wrought-iron railing encircles the platform, and a limestone lectern 3'-8" high x 4' wide x 2'-2" deep is centered along the front. The platform alone measures 20'-2" wide x 14'-6" deep x 3'-6.75" high; including the projecting stairs, the rostrum measures 34'-2" wide x 14'-6" deep.

Twelve square Tuscan-order buff-brick columns with limestone bases and capstones, 10'-6.75" high x 1'-4.5" square and spaced 2'-8" apart on center, are set in groups of three at each corner of the platform. They support a limestone entablature and gable roof with pediments facing the ends of the rostrum. Wood framing supports the batten-seam copper roof. The interior ceiling and moldings are cement plaster on wire lath.

The rostrum is oriented to face a grassy lawn on which rows of stone benches are installed.

**Site context:** The rostrum sits near a corner of the irregularly shaped cemetery. It faces generally southeast across rows of stone benches to the line of a paved drive that once terminated at the cemetery's flagstaff.

**History:** The national cemetery at Beverly was established in 1864 to handle military interments from local hospitals during the Civil War. Originally 1 acre in size, it was expanded to 6 acres through additions made in 1936 and 1937. The U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps, responsible for the maintenance and oversight of the cemetery, contracted for the clearing, grading, and planting of these additions and for the construction of new circulation paths that included an entrance drive, a flagstaff circle, and two axial roads, one leading from the flagstaff to the 1875 New Jersey Soldiers' Memorial Monument and the 1878 superintendent's lodge, and another leading from the flagstaff to a new rostrum and assembly area.

Surviving drawings indicate the rostrum was designed at the headquarters of the Second Corps Area of the Office of the Quartermaster General, Governor's Island, New York. Final construction drawings were prepared in the Construction Division of the quartermaster general's office in Washington, D.C.. The M. B. Lewis Company of Mount Holly, New Jersey, received the construction contract. Work began June 28, 1937, and was completed October 2, 1937, at a total cost of \$5,264.13.

In order to handle an increase in burials anticipated after World War II, the cemetery was substantially enlarged to its current 64.55 acres through land purchases in 1948 and 1951. The soldiers' monument was dismantled in 1951 and the flagstaff later moved to a different position near the entrance, leaving the rostrum with a less evident relationship to the cemetery's other features than had been the case when it was built.

The cemetery was transferred from the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Memorial Affairs Agency to the Veterans Administration (now the Department of Veterans Affairs) in 1973. It was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1997 as part of the Civil War Era National Cemeteries Multiple Property Submission.

**Sources:**

Call, Lewis W. *United States Military Reservations, National Cemeteries, and Military Parks. Title, Jurisdiction, etc.* Washington, D.C.: G.P.O., 1907.

Holt, Dean W. *American Military Cemeteries*. 2nd ed. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co., Inc., 2010.

Office of the Quartermaster General. Second Corps Area. Proposed Rostrum for National Cemetery at Beverly, N.J., Mar. 19, 1937. Drawing no. 6834-1003x. National Cemetery Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, Washington, D.C.

Office of the Quartermaster General. Construction Division. U.S. National Cemetery, Beverly, N.J., Entrance Gates, Fence & Rostrum, Apr. 6, 1937. Drawings 6834-105 & -

107. National Cemetery Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs,  
Washington, D.C.

Records of the Veterans Administration, Department of Memorial Affairs, National  
Cemetery Historical File (Record Group 15/ A-1, Entry 25), National Archives and  
Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, General Correspondence and  
Reports Relating to National and Post Cemeteries (Record Group 92, Entry 576),  
National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

Sammartino, Therese T. National Register of Historic Places nomination for "Beverly  
National Cemetery." Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1997.

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the United States and Alaska and of National Cemeteries*. Washington, D.C.: G.P.O., 1904.

**Historian:** Michael R. Harrison, 2012

**Project Information:** The documentation of lodges and rostrums in the national  
cemeteries was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), one of  
the Heritage Documentation Programs of the National Park Service, Richard O'Connor,  
Chief. The project was sponsored by the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) of  
the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Sara Amy Leach, Senior Historian. Project  
planning was coordinated by Catherine Lavoie, Chief of HABS. Historical research was  
undertaken by HABS Historians Michael R. Harrison and Virginia B. Price. NCA  
Historian Jennifer M. Perunko provided research and editorial support. Field work for  
selected sites was carried out and measured drawings produced by HABS Architects  
Paul Davidson, Ryan Pierce, and Mark Schara.