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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Sitka National Cemetery
other names/site number Sitka Post Cemetery; Sitka Military Cemetery

2. Location

street & number 803 Sawmill Creek Road not for publication
city or town Sitka vicinity
state Alaska code AK county Sitka code 220 zip code 99835

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination
request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic
Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets
does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant
 nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
Kathy Schuch MPO 12/20/11
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
VA
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See Continuation sheet for additional
comments.)
Judith E. Bettner 12-16-2011
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Alaska
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
 entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet
 determined eligible for the
National Register.
 See continuation sheet
 determined not eligible for the
National Register.
 removed from the National
Register.
 other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper [Signature] Date of Action 3/7/2012

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Section 1

Other names/site number AHRS SIT-00023

Section 2

“Vicinity” should not be checked.

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
1	0	sites
2	0	structures
7	0	objects
11	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

FUNERARY/cemetery

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

FUNERARY/cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

NA

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation _____
walls _____

roof _____
other _____

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Sitka National Cemetery is located at 803 Sawmill Creek Road in Sitka, Alaska. The 3.23-acre cemetery lies on a tiered, hilly plain with manicured grass and is surrounded by native trees. The number of interments through July 2011 is 1,159. There are a number of irregular sections designated for the interment of full caskets and cremains, and for memorial markers. All government-issued headstones are of the upright style. In addition, there are some private headstones in the oldest part of the cemetery. The cemetery is flanked by the Sitka city cemetery on the east side and by Geodetic Way and Sawmill Creek Highway on the south and west sides. Forests are located to the north side.

The oldest part of the cemetery faces Sawmill Creek Road and contains lettered burial sections (B to T and AA-CC), as well as a civilian section (CIV); collectively these represent section 1. The entrance sits several yards back from the road along a circular drive with a grassy median in the center. It is bracketed by two cast-concrete entrance columns. The entrance columns were constructed in 1967. The column on the left has a rectangular bronze plaque, which displays an eagle in relief and is inscribed:

SITKA
NATIONAL
CEMETERY

The column on the right has a round bronze seal of the Department of Veterans Affairs. The columns are attached to a wooden plank fence that encloses the southern perimeter of the cemetery; on the left side it continues to the perimeter of the older sections of the cemetery along the road.

From this older entrance, a concrete walkway leads up the center of the burial sections toward the top of the hill. On both sides are graves that date from World War II to the present. After the first five rows of graves, a six-foot concrete retaining wall creates a terrace in the hill. The terrace is reached by a set of stairs from the central walkway. There is a second flight of steps at the eastern end of the retaining wall.

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The sections above the retaining wall contain some of the earliest burials at the cemetery. Most of the grave markers are standard U.S. government issue from various time periods. There are approximately a dozen private markers, including that of Governor John G. Brady.

From the central staircase, the walkway becomes gravel, with other gravel-covered walkways intersecting it between burial sections. The central walkway curves slightly outward around a modern flagpole and continues several yards farther north. At the crest of the hill is a large gravel-covered plaza, which contains two 43mm Hotchkiss guns set on concrete bases. Behind the guns is a metal chain and post fence set into a stone retaining wall, which is visible on the north side of the hill. The retaining wall appears as low curbing around the gun plaza.

The east side of the hill is enclosed by a concrete post and metal chain fence, which marks the eastern boundary of the cemetery. The western side of the hill has been terraced and contains several smaller burials sections. At the base of the hill on the north side, below the retaining wall, is another terraced burial section where civilians were traditionally buried.

The newer, secondary entrance is located at the intersection of Sawmill Creek Road and Geodetic Way. The entrance road runs approximately north-south in the newest section of the cemetery. It is adjacent to the west side of the hill. At the end of the entrance road is a circular drive and parking area. The administrative/maintenance building is on the northeast side of the circle. The one-story, cross-gabled building has vertical siding and a new metal roof. It was constructed in the 1980s and has been expanded since. Directly west of the building is a front-gable, open-air committal shelter. South (left) of the committal shelter is a small area established by the local American Legion post as a place to dispose of worn American flags. The site contains a burn barrel and stone marker surrounded by a semicircle of concrete blocks. North (right) of the committal shelter is a stone marker affixed with a bronze plaque, which features the first verse of the poem "Bivouac of the Dead" by Theodore O'Hara, installed in 2003. A cast-iron Gettysburg Address tablet was installed in 2009.

A concrete walkway meanders northward from the circular drive through several newer burial sections, numbered 2-5, and a memorial marker section.

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The numbers shown for contributing resources within the property reflect the following:

Sites: Cemetery

Buildings: Administration/maintenance building (1986/2005)

Structures: Committal shelter, perimeter fence (c.1963)

Objects: Hotchkiss guns (2); U.S flagpole; POW/MIA flagpole (c. 1990s); entrance pillars and plaques (1960s-1970s); Bivouac of the Dead plaque (2003); Gettysburg Address tablet (2009)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
B. removed from its original location.
C. birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance.
D a cemetery.
E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
F a commemorative property
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Levels of Significance (local, state, national)

NATIONAL

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

MILITARY

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

Period of Significance

1867-Present

Significant Dates

1867, 1890

1924, 1925, 1973, 1983

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

Architect/Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
previously listed in the National Register
Previously determined eligible by the National Register
designated a National Historic Landmark
recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State Agency
Federal Agency
Local Government
University
Other

Name of repository:

Brockington and Assoc, Mt. Pleasant, SC

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Sitka National Cemetery is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with the U.S. government's presence in Alaska and the creation of a national cemetery. Created in 1867-1868, the cemetery has served as the resting place for American military personnel after the United States bought Alaska from the Russians. Sitka National Cemetery is of national significance.

Creation of Sitka, Alaska

The national cemetery at Sitka, Alaska, has been linked to the beginning of the U.S. government's presence in Sitka in late 1867. The native Tlingit people first settled the site of present-day Sitka. In 1799, Alexandr Baranov, chief manager for the Russian-American Company, arrived in Sitka to establish a trading post with the Tlingit people. However, the trading partnership did not last. In 1802, a group of Tlingit destroyed the original establishment known as Redoubt Saint Michael (an area today called Old Sitka) and killed most of the Russian inhabitants. Baranov was forced to pay 10,000 rubles in ransom for the safe return of the surviving settlers.

Baranov returned to Sitka in 1804 with a large contingent of Russians and Aleuts on the Russian warship *Neva*. The ship bombarded the Tlingit fort but did not cause significant damage. The Russians then launched an attack on the fort and were repelled by Tlingit fighters and sharpshooters. However, the Tlingit ran out of gunpowder and were forced to leave the fort. Following the Russian victory at the Battle of Sitka, the Russians established a permanent settlement, named Novoarkhangelsk (or New Archangel, a reference to Arkhangelsk, the largest city in the region where Baranov was born). In 1808, with Baranov still governor, Sitka was designated the capital of Russian America.

Sitka remained the center of the Russian trading empire in Alaska until the 1860s. However, over-hunting had diminished the number of sea otters and thereby the Russians' interest in the New World. In 1867, the Russians sold Alaska to the United States for \$7.2 million and a transfer ceremony took place in Sitka on October 18. Brevet Major General Jefferson C. Davis was the first commander of the military district of Alaska and took charge of the new territory. The Army supported the U.S. Collector of Customs and maintained law and order in Alaska. General Davis made his headquarters in the building on the hill that had been the residence of the

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Russian officers. The American soldiers were quartered in the barracks of the Siberian Battalion, and the sentries of the United States walked the beats of the Russian guards.¹

Creation and Operation of the Sitka Post Cemetery, 1867 to 1912

As with most military posts, one of the service and support needs for the military in Alaska was a post cemetery. From the earliest days of the U.S. Army, the Quartermaster Corps officers were responsible for the construction and maintenance of military posts; this included the establishment of burials grounds. What emerged was a uniform system for burying, marking and recording graves in the frontier posts. After the Civil War, the U.S. Army began the process of creating large national cemeteries as final resting places for the Union dead; many military installations maintained their post cemeteries.² By *General Orders* No. 45, Headquarters of the Army, series of 1868, commanding officers of posts are charged with the establishment and maintenance of post cemeteries.³ Soon after establishing the presence in Sitka, Davis set up the cemetery.

There is no indication of how Davis chose the location for the cemetery. There was a vacant hillside near the Russian Orthodox cemetery, but Davis did not choose that area. Three other hillsides were available; however, to reach two of them required the crossing of a muskeg (bogland). The third hillside was more accessible because a plank/log road connected the hill to the main road in town. Davis selected this site for the post cemetery. No description of the area exists, but local historians surmise that the area was treeless and covered with stumps and brush, because the Russians had clear-cut the area. The first burial at the cemetery took place on December 25, 1867, with the interment of Alexander Coulter, Company H, Second U.S. Artillery Regiment. The cause of his death is unknown. Another early burial was that of Lieutenant W. B. Livermore, who is believed to have died in a duel with another Army officer over a Russian maid, Nadia.⁴

¹ C.L. Andrews, *The Story of Sitka: The Historic Outpost of the Northwest Coast* (Seattle: 1922), 79, 99.

² Ed Steere, "Early Growth of the National Cemetery System," *The Quartermaster Review* 33 (March-April 1953): 2-3.

³ U.S. Department of War, *Report of the Secretary of War, Being Part of the Message and Documents Communicated to the Two Houses of Congress during the Second Session of the Forty-Second Congress* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1871), 208.

⁴ "National Cemetery Marks Sitka's History," *Sitka Weekend* May 22, 1992, 1A.

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In 1877, the Army relocated its garrison from Sitka. Until the U.S. Navy arrived in 1880, the collector of customs was the U.S. government's defacto administrator of Alaska. At the time of the Navy's arrival, there were only eight to ten burials on the hill and a few civilians buried on the north side of the hill. While the Navy used the cemetery for the burial of deceased naval personnel, it failed to take care of the cemetery or appoint a caretaker for it.⁵

Controversy surrounding a road that provided access to the cemetery arose in 1885. In the early 1880's, the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions built and began operating a school, run in part by Sheldon Jackson, a Presbyterian missionary to the area and the U.S. General Agent of Education in Alaska. The school, established to educate Native Alaskan children and alternately called the Sheldon Jackson Institute and then the Sitka Industrial Training School, stood on the road leading to the Sitka government cemetery. In 1885, during a funeral procession, the mourners claimed the road to the cemetery was blocked by a closed gate at the school. Local political leaders, who disliked Jackson, eventually arrested him for obstructing a public highway. He was released after being placed under a \$3200 bond to appear for trial. The trial never occurred as the officials were replaced a month later and the charges against Jackson set aside. In reality the road was not blocked, though a covered way had been built over the road in order to ease access between school buildings on either side of the road; the school had also constructed an alternative road at the perimeter of their property that was deemed to provide similar access.⁶

After the road controversy, several local leaders realized the importance of the cemetery.⁷ In October 1888, John Keatley, U.S. District Judge for Alaska, wrote General Samuel B. Holabird, Quartermaster General of the Army, regarding the horrific conditions at the Sitka government cemetery. Keatley commented that the fence was gone, there were several unmarked graves, and the cemetery was generally in bad shape. He recommended the appointment of a superintendent and a budget of \$300 a year. Holabird instructed Colonel R. N. Batchelder, director of General Depots and National Cemeteries, to investigate the allegations.⁸ Batchelder dispatched Captain J.

⁵ "National Cemetery Marks Sitka's History," 1A.

⁶ Sheldon Jackson, *A Statement of Facts Concerning the Difficulties at Sitka, Alaska in 1885* (Washington, D.C.: Thomas McGill & Co., 1886), 5, 11; "National Cemetery Marks Sitka's History," 1A.

⁷ At the time, the Sitka National Cemetery was known as the Navy Cemetery, the Government Cemetery, the Military Cemetery, or the Soldiers and Sailors Cemetery.

⁸ Letter from John Keatley to Gen. Holabird, dated October 6, 1888, RG 92, Box 67, Entry 576; Orders from Gen. Holabird to R. N. Batchelder, dated November 9, 1888, Box 67, Entry 576, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, RG 92, National Archives Building, Washington, DC.

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R. Campbell to the cemetery. Campbell described the cemetery as being surrounded by a wooden fence; however, locals would regularly steal the pickets. He also described how the headboards had rotted away, and that "brambles" covered the hill.⁹ The Army had to decide whether to make improvements to the cemetery or close it down.

In December 1888, the Army decided not to close the Sitka post cemetery.¹⁰ The next year the Quartermaster General ordered new marble headstones for each of the graves at the cemetery. In November 1889, 24 headstones arrived, and sailors and marines from the *USS Pinta* erected them in the cemetery.¹¹

While the Army was working to clean-up the cemetery, there was some dispute about who owned the land. After the United States purchased Alaska, there was a wave of land speculation around Sitka, which resulted in confusion regarding ownership. In 1878, John G. Brady claimed 160 acres east of the town, and he later deeded it to the Presbyterian Board of Missions. When Governor Lyman Knapp reached Sitka in June 1889, he saw that the uncontrolled land speculation would result in the government having no lands, so he drew up a list of lands he felt were essential for the federal government to own in Sitka. A letter from the Secretary of the Interior to the president included the topic of the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions and its claim on the 10-acre military cemetery. On June 21, 1890, President Benjamin Harrison issued an executive order withdrawing 10 acres of land from the public domain for use as a military and naval cemetery. He also reserved land for a school, a park at Indian River, barracks, a parade ground, a governor's house and all of Japonski Island for the military.¹² By 1899, there were 38 soldiers and sailors buried in the cemetery.¹³

⁹ Letter from Capt. J. R. Campbell to Col. R. N. Batchelder, dated November 25, 1888, Box 67, Entry 576, RG 92; "National Cemetery Marks Sitka's History," 1A.

¹⁰ Letter from R. N. Batchelder to Asst AG, HQ, Department of Columbia, dated December 27, 1888, RG 92, Box 67, Entry 576; R. N. DeArmond, *A Sitka Chronology, 1867-1987 with Index* (Sitka: Sitka Historical Society, 1987), 19.

¹¹ *The Alaskan*, May 4, 1889, 2; November 2, 1889, 1; "National Cemetery Marks Sitka's History," 1A.

¹² Lewis W. Call, *United States Military Reservations, National Cemeteries and Military Parks. Title, Jurisdiction Etc. Prepared in the Office of the Judge-Advocate-General, United States Army. Revised Edition by Lewis W. Call* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1907), 11.

¹³ Robert N. DeArmond, *From Sitka's Past* (Sitka: Sitka Historical Society, 1995), 184-185; "Acquisition of Land for Sitka Cemetery in 1890," on file at the NCA History Office, Washington, D.C.; *The Alaskan*, June 3, 1899, 2.

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As noted, one of the problems with the cemetery was access. The road from Sitka to the cemetery was a wooden plank road in total disrepair. In 1892 Deputy Collector of Customs Charles B. Islam began a fundraising drive to build a road from Beach Road (current Lincoln Road) to the cemetery. Islam raised \$588.20. A committee of local citizens recommended abandoning the former road and building a new road at the site of present-day Jeff Davis Road. They dug drainage ditches on both sides of the new road and covered the new road with beach gravel. The citizens agreed to do volunteer repairs every two to three years. By 1900, the U.S. Department of Agriculture had opened an experiment station west of the cemetery and helped to maintain the road.¹⁴

A few years after the road repair, the citizens of Sitka realized that the cemetery was again deteriorating. In 1905, Sergeant William A. Russell, U.S. Marine Corps (retired), requested and received 14 marble headstones for marking graves at the cemetery. Russell asked residents to help him identify the graves.¹⁵ At that time, there were 47 men listed as burials at the cemetery, including 23 Army, 12 Navy, 8 Marines, 3 from the Revenue Service and 1 from the Coast and Geodetic Survey, as well as several civilians.¹⁶

Rebirth of the Sitka Military Cemetery in the 1920s

When the U.S. Navy ended its presence at Sitka in 1912, the cemetery was once again abandoned and left in disrepair. The military loaned the land occupied by the former naval hospital and barracks to the Interior Department, which used it to house indigent prospectors. However, no agency took responsibility for the cemetery upkeep. Dense growth of trees and underbrush gradually obscured the site. In December 1920, Sitka Post No. 13 of the American Legion wrote the War Department complaining about the cemetery; the War Department responded that there were no funds for the cemetery's care. The American Legion post then wrote the Department of the Navy, which provided \$1,200 to the governor of Alaska for reconditioning the cemetery. By 1921, Alaskan Territorial Governor Scott C. Bone asked the federal government to make the old military cemetery a national cemetery because of "the

¹⁴ DeArmond, *A Sitka Chronology 1867-1987*, 21; "National Cemetery Marks Sitka's History," 1A.

¹⁵ DeArmond, *A Sitka Chronology 1867-1987*, 34.

¹⁶ "National Cemetery Marks Sitka's History," 1A.

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historical value and associations of Sitka and surroundings.”¹⁷ A 1922 Memorial Day program indicated that there were 61 burials at the cemetery.¹⁸

While it provided funding for the cemetery, the Navy Department did not want the responsibility for cemetery maintenance. In a letter to the Department of the Army, the Navy stated that the cemetery was not on Navy Department land, and they had no jurisdiction over it. The Navy inquired about the possibility of making the plot a national cemetery. Both Governor Scott Cardelle Bone and the American Legion supported that idea.¹⁹

In an executive order on June 12, 1924, President Calvin Coolidge designated the cemetery as Sitka National Cemetery. However, he also reduced the size of the cemetery to 3.98 acres. The next year, on June 1, 1925, another order reduced it to 1.19 acres.²⁰ From 1924 to July 1932, the cemetery was maintained under the supervision of the Alaska Road Commission. After the jurisdiction of that commission was transferred from the War Department to the Department of the Interior, the cemetery was maintained by the commanding officer at Chilkoot Barracks, 90 miles distant. However, when \$5,000 in Public Works Administration funds was obtained for improvements at the cemetery, it was again necessary to call on the Alaska Road Commission to handle the project.²¹

In March 1926, the federal government authorized funding for repairs at the cemetery. The Alaska Road Commission, under local foreman Peter Frierschield, moved several graves from the Pioneers Cemetery to the national cemetery. They also worked on the landscape. On May 14, 1926, the U.S. Army provided the cemetery with two 43mm Hotchkiss guns from the Benecia Arsenal in California; the guns were used during the Spanish-American War.²²

¹⁷ “National Cemetery Is Proposed for Site Near Sitka,” *The Pathfinder*, v. 2, (10), September 1921, 11.

¹⁸ “Decoration Day Exercises Held at Sitka, Alaska, May 30, 1922.”

¹⁹ “The Following is the only activity in Alaska in Which the Memorial Branch, Office of the Quartermaster General is concerned: Sitka, Alaska, National Cemetery, circa 1937,” on file, Sitka file, NCA History Office, Washington, D.C.; “Sitka, The Beauty Spot of Alaska,” *The Pathfinder* 2, no. 12 (October 1921), 8.

²⁰ National Cemeteries: A Study Prepared by the OQMG Upon Request of Committee of Military Affairs, 15 February 1945, Volume 1, RG 15, Entry 24-A1, File Box 1.

²¹ Sitka Draft History, March 24, 1954, on file, Sitka file, NCA History Office, Washington, D.C.

²² DeArmond, *A Sitka Chronology 1867-1987*, 237; “National Cemetery Marks Sitka’s History,” 1A.

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Growth of Sitka National Cemetery, 1929 to 1948

Two years later, in 1928, closure of other military posts resulted in the expansion of Sitka National Cemetery. The Army ordered the removal of all remains from abandoned military posts in Alaska and consolidated the remains at active cemeteries. In 1929, the Army moved 49 burials from abandoned post cemeteries at Fort St. Michael, Fort Davis, Fort Egbert and Fort Gibbon to Sitka.²³

A few years later, in 1932, the Army recommended disposition of Sitka National Cemetery. At the time, the quartermaster general concurred and recommended that the Assistant Secretary of War abandon the cemetery and dispose of the land. However, on December 12, 1932, the War Department denied the request and continued to maintain the cemetery.²⁴

From 1927 until 1937, the federal government allocated \$12,100 for the enhancement of the cemetery. This included \$7,000 from the War Department and \$5,100 in emergency funds. By 1937, the cemetery had approximately 126 interments and averaged three to four burials a year.²⁵ As part of the improvements, the Army constructed an 8-by-10-foot tool shed in June 1938. The shed, costing \$147, sat on wood piers and had wood floors and a cedar-shingle roof.²⁶

On July 9, 1937, the caretaker for the Sitka National Cemetery died. The War Department had paid the part-time caretaker \$12 a year to watch over the cemetery. After his death, the Army assigned management of the cemetery to an enlisted man at the Signal Corps Station in Sitka.²⁷

²³ Letter from Lt. Col. W. F. Floyd to Joannell Breen, dated April 21, 1967, on file, Sitka file, NCA History Office, Washington, D.C.

²⁴ Abandonment of the Sitka National Cemetery, From Major General Malin Graig to the Adjutant General, Washington, D.C., October 27, 1932; Sitka Draft History, March 24, 1954, on file, Sitka file, NCA History Office, Washington, D.C.

²⁵ "The Following is the only activity in Alaska in Which the Memorial Branch, Office of the Quartermaster General is concerned: Sitka, Alaska, National Cemetery, circa 1937."

²⁶ Sitka National Cemetery, Sitka, Alaska. Buildings and Utilities in National Cemetery. Tool Shed Form. NARA RG 15, Entry 25 A-1, Box 37, Folder 1.

²⁷ "The Following is the only activity in Alaska in Which the Memorial Branch, Office of the Quartermaster General is concerned: Sitka, Alaska, National Cemetery, circa 1937."

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During World War II, the cemetery continued to serve as a burial place for soldiers. In April 1945, the Army Quartermaster Corps requested that Congress pass a bill to establish a new national cemetery in Juneau and move the existing graves at Sitka to the new site. However, local citizens rallied against the proposal, stating various reasons to maintain the cemetery, and Congress did not pass the legislation.²⁸

After this denial, the Army quickly moved to use the cemetery. In 1946, the Army moved 52 graves from Chilkoot Barracks; 21 graves from Bayview Cemetery, Ketchikan; and one grave from Evergreen Cemetery, Juneau, to Sitka for reinterment.

Creation of the Modern Sitka National Cemetery

In November 1948, the chief of the Army's Memorial Division requested the National Park Service (NPS) serve as caretaker for the cemetery. Duties included raising and lowering the flag, maintaining the grounds, and arranging for opening and closing of graves. The NPS agreed to perform this job for cost plus 10 percent overhead. The Army also allowed the NPS to use a Jeep and 500 gallons of gasoline left from World War II. The NPS continued to serve as caretaker until 1956.²⁹

In the Alaskan Theatre after World War II, final interment of remains was carried out in either of two places: Fort Richardson post cemetery or Sitka National Cemetery. Actual repatriation proceedings began May 1, 1948, with the disinterment of remains on Kodiak Island, and they culminated with the final interment ceremonies at Sitka National Cemetery four months later. In addition to Kodiak Island, other temporary military cemeteries were closed at Attu, Kiska, Shenmya, Amchitka, Adak, Unmak, Unalaska and Cold Bay. The final interment ceremonies for 99 war dead at Sitka National Cemetery were held on Sunday, September 5, 1948. Additionally, shipside ceremonies for 1,570 remains being repatriated from various Alaskan cemeteries to the United States aboard the USAT *Honda Knot* were held on Friday, August 27, 1948, at Sitka.³⁰

²⁸ Bob DeArmond, "Around & About Alaska," *Daily Sitka Sentinel*, December 2, 1991, 6; "Why Move the National Cemetery?" *Sitka Sentinel*, April 11, 1945, 1.

²⁹ Joan M. Antonson and William S. Hanable, *Administrative History of Sitka National Historical Park* (Anchorage Alaska: National Park Service, 1987), 93-94.

³⁰ "Brief History of the Program for the Return of World War II Dead from Alaskan Theater," On file, Fort Richardson National Cemetery, Fort Richardson, Alaska.

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In 1949, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers prepared plans to improve the national cemetery with a new entrance, drives and walks, and a series of terraces faced with masonry retaining walls. The upper-terrace retaining wall was to have a memorial pavilion with an interior wall that would include a panel measuring approximately 800 square feet and contain the inscribed names, service, and date of death of those who lost their lives in the Aleutian area. However, these plans were not carried out.³¹

The 1950s and 60s saw a number of changes at Sitka National Cemetery, as the Army again focused on improving the cemetery. In 1957, the Corps of Engineers installed a water and utilities system in the cemetery. In June 1959, the Army erected a new 40-foot-high flagstaff.³² In September of that same year, the Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church of the United States deeded an additional 0.2 acres at the entrance to the cemetery to the U.S. government.³³ In 1967 the Alaska District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, completed construction of a new entrance off Sawmill Creek Road. Additionally, the Corps completed a boundary survey, and developed new plans to construct an ornamental concrete retaining wall to replace a previous stone one and laid out a new fence plan.³⁴

In 1972, the Army installed new bronze plaques at the entrance.³⁵ The next year, Master Sergeant Bravison Wright, Chief Operations Non-Commissioned Officer at the Fort Richardson Post Facilities Engineer Office, reconstructed the wooden carriages for the two 43mm Hotchkiss guns. Since the U.S. Army no longer had smiths for this type of work, Sergeant Wright experimented and learned how to re-create the gun carriages on his own time.³⁶

Sitka National Cemetery, along with 81 others, were transferred from the Department of the Army to the Veterans Administration (which became the Department of Veterans Affairs—DVA— in 1989) by the National Cemetery Act of 1973. At that time the cemetery consisted of

³¹ Memorial Group for Sitka National Cemetery, July 13, 1949, QMGMC 687.

³² Sitka National Cemetery, Sitka, Alaska. Buildings and Utilities in National Cemetery. Flagstaff Form. NARA RG 15, Entry 25 A-1, Box 37, Folder 1.

³³ Letter from Lt. Col. W. F. Floyd to Joanel Breen, dated April 21, 1967, on file, Sitka file, NCA History Office, Washington, D.C.

³⁴ "More Work Planned to Improve Sitka National Cemetery," *Daily Sentinel*, June 7, 1967.

³⁵ Disposition Form, to Superintendent, Sitka National Cemetery, dated June 27, 1972.

³⁶ "Wright Man Found for Wheelright Job," *Sitka Sentinel*, April 22, 1972.

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1.39 acres; a special use permit from the State of Alaska, Department of Highways for .08 acres at the entrance also existed.

In 1983 Senator Frank Murkowski advocated expanding the Sitka National Cemetery, because at the time it was the only national cemetery in Alaska and was expected to run out of grave space within the year. The American Legion in Sitka requested that the senator contact the Alaska Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Geological Survey, which was expected to gain control of federal land adjacent to the cemetery. Murkowski suggested that the city of Sitka trade 0.75 acres of land next to the cemetery for an undetermined number of acres of federal land north of the cemetery.³⁷ Though the transfer did not proceed quite as the Senator suggested, in July 1983, Congress passed the "Sitka National Cemetery Transfer Act of 1983" whereby certain lands lying easterly of the cemetery were to be surveyed by the Department of the Interior and transferred to the Veterans Administration. The total acreage eventually transferred was 1.84 acres in two lots. Some of the acreage was already being used by the cemetery under special permits.³⁸

In 1986 the cemetery received a new 55-foot flagpole after vandals damaged the previous one.³⁹ On February 6, 1987, the Veterans Administration began to build out Sections 3, 4 and 5 to provide an additional 1,300 graves.⁴⁰ That same year, the administration constructed the new service building and committal shelter.⁴¹ A project was just completed in 2009 for more crypts in Sections 4 and 5.

Recently, new features have been placed in the cemetery, which are historically associated with origin of the national cemetery system. In 2003 a cast-aluminum plaque with the first stanza of Theodore O'Hara's poem "Bivouac of the Dead" was installed near the committal shelter.⁴² In

³⁷ "Sen. Murkowski Urges Expansion of Sitka Cemetery," *Daily Sentinel*, April 11, 1983, 1.

³⁸ "Sitka National Cemetery Transfer Act of 1983," 97 Stat. 322 1983; "43 CFR Public Land Order 6458." *Federal Register*, 48:173 (6 September 1983) p. 40232.

³⁹ "New Flagpole Needed at National Cemetery," *Sitka Sentinel*, December 22, 1986.

⁴⁰ DeArmond, *A Sitka Chronology 1867-1987*, 182.

⁴¹ "National Cemetery Marks Sitka's History," 1A.

⁴² The original cast-iron Bivouac plaques were installed in national cemeteries in the early 1880s, up to seven at each property.

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2009 a cast-iron replica of an original Gettysburg Address tablet was installed in the traffic circle in the new section of the cemetery.⁴³

Headstones and Notable Burials/Memorials at Sitka National Cemetery

The variety of grave markers at Sitka National Cemetery reflects the history and evolution of government headstones. After the War Department created the first organized system of marking graves with wooden boards in 1861, a concerted effort was undertaken to recover the dead from their temporary wartime burial places and accomplish permanent reburial. Public sentiment turned toward a more permanent mode of marking graves, and in 1873 Secretary of War William W. Belknap approved the first stone design for permanent national cemetery markers.

For the known dead, the War Department adopted a slab design of marble or durable stone 4 inches thick, 10 inches wide, and 12 inches high. The stone was polished and the top slightly curved. The number of the grave, rank, name of soldier, and soldier's home state were engraved on the front face. While not part of the original design, the majority of the headstones from this time period feature a recessed shield in which the inscription appears in bas relief.⁴⁴ This marker, referred to as the Civil War type, was originally designed for members of the Union Army but was eventually used for the eligible deceased of the Indian Wars and Spanish-American War. A small block of marble with the number of the grave cut on the top face marked the graves of the unknown dead. The War Department discontinued the use of stone blocks for unknown soldiers in 1903 and adopted the same stone design for both known and unknown soldiers.⁴⁵

Following World War I, a board of officers composed of Assistant Secretary of War J. M. Wainwright, Army Chief of Staff General John J. Pershing and Quartermaster General Harry L. Rogers adopted a new design to be used for all graves except those of the veterans of the Civil War and Spanish-American War. The General-type stone consisted of a slab design of American white marble with a slightly rounded top. The inscription on the front face included the soldier's

⁴³ A total of 62 new Gettysburg Address tablets were installed at national cemeteries that never had one or where they were lost; the original tablets date to ca. 1909.

⁴⁴ E-mail/conversation, Jennifer Perunko, Historian, National Cemetery Administration, July 2009.

⁴⁵ Kelsey R. Cass, "None Else of Name: The Origin and Early Development of the United States National Cemetery System" (Ph.D. diss., Claremont University, 2001), 43-46.

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Section number 8 Page 15

name, rank, regiment, division, date of death, and home state. A religious emblem, the Latin cross or Star of David, was authorized for use on each stone.⁴⁶

There are a number of notable burials in Sitka National Cemetery including John Green Brady, governor of the Territory of Alaska from 1897 to 1906. Brady came to Sitka as a Presbyterian missionary and later became commissioner and registrar of the Land Office, where he served until the president appointed him governor. He died in Sitka of a stroke on December 17, 1918. In fall 1924, Brady's wife returned to the territory and placed a large boulder over his grave.

Also buried at Sitka is Olympic medalist Charles William Paddock, winner of two gold and two silver medals in the 1920, 1924 and 1928 Olympics and nicknamed "The World's Fastest Human." This U.S. Marine Corps captain died at the age of 42 in a military plane crash near Sitka. He was interred in Section Q, Plot 7 on July 26, 1943.

Though not buried at Sitka National Cemetery, Congressional Medal of Honor recipient Staff Sergeant Archie Van Winkle is memorialized there. Van Winkle served in the Korean War with the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, Company B, 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, 1st Marine Division (Reinforced). He was awarded the medal for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a platoon sergeant in Company B, in action against enemy aggressor forces near Sudong, Korea, November 2, 1950. Staff Sergeant Van Winkle's was born in Juneau, Alaska; his ashes were scattered and a memorial marker was placed at the top of the hill in the historic part of the cemetery.

Summary

Over 1,000 military men and women, and their eligible spouses and dependents are buried in Sitka National Cemetery, as of July 2011. The U.S. flag flies daily over the orderly rows of white marble headstones in honor of the lives and deeds of those who answered the call of duty. Set against the serene backdrop of the forested mountains of Baranof Island, Sitka National Cemetery reflects the lives of the early Americans who first settled Alaska, and those willing to serve and protect their country in times of war and peace. The cemetery is maintained and preserved as a final resting place and memorial to U.S. military personnel.

⁴⁶ Cass, "None Else of Name," 43-46.

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 3.23 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>8</u>	<u>480688.03</u>	<u>6323130.69</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Edward Salo, Senior Historian / Jennifer Perunko, Historian

organization Brockington and Associates, Inc. / DVA - NCA date 6-2009 / 8-2011

street & number 498 Wando Park Blvd, Suite 700 / telephone 843.881.3128 /
810 Vermont Ave NW (41C4) 202.632.5441

City or town Mt. Pleasant / Washington state SC / DC zip code 29464/20420

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location
- A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Kathleen Schamel, Federal Preservation Officer, Department of Veterans Affairs

street & number 810 Vermont Avenue, NW (00CFM1) telephone 202.632.5529

city or town Washington state DC zip code 20420

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

United States Department of the Interior
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Section number 10 Page 19

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA: VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundaries are indicated on the accompanying base map.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA: BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The National Cemetery Administration recognizes the above as the existing boundaries of the cemetery.

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Section number 10 Page 20



Site plan of Sitka National Cemetery

MA = Memorial area

CIV = Civilian section

Lettered sections are collectively considered section 1.

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Continuation Sheet

Section number 11 Page 21

SITKA NATIONAL CEMETERY

Sitka Borough, Alaska

Edward Salo, Photographer

Date of Photographs: April 26, 2009

View up main hill at cemetery, facing northwest
PHOTO 1 of 26

View from top of hill toward Sawmill Creek Road, Section T in background, facing south
PHOTO 2 of 26

View of cannons on top of hill, facing northwest
PHOTO 3 of 26

View from top of hill to the rear, facing north
PHOTO 4 of 26

View of hill from Sawmill Road, facing northwest
PHOTO 5 of 26

View of main entrance, facing northwest
PHOTO 6 of 26

View of side of hill from service entrance road, facing east
PHOTO 7 of 26

View of Section 3 (expansion area), facing north
PHOTO 8 of 26

View of Memorial Section near administrative/maintenance building, facing east
PHOTO 9 of 26

View of Governor John G. Brady marker
PHOTO 10 of 26

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Continuation Sheet

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View of headstones in Section 2 near administrative/maintenance building, facing east
PHOTO 11 of 26

View of west side of hill, facing northwest
PHOTO 12 of 26

View of entrance and hill, facing northwest
PHOTO 13 of 26

View of entrance, facing north
PHOTO 14 of 26

View of graves on backside of hill, facing southeast
PHOTO 15 of 26

View of American Legion flag disposal area, facing west
PHOTO 17 of 26

View of administrative/maintenance building with Section 2 in front, facing east
PHOTO 19 of 26

View of Sections 2 and 3 behind administrative/maintenance building, facing northwest
PHOTO 20 of 26

View up hill, facing northwest
PHOTO 21 of 26

View of west side of cemetery from top of hill, facing south
PHOTO 23 of 26

View of administrative/maintenance building and backside of hill, facing north
PHOTO 25 of 26

View of Section 4 toward building, facing north
PHOTO 26 of 26

Recommendation: SLR Return

Action: SLR Return None

Documentation Issues-Discussion Sheet

State Name: AK County Name SITKA Resource Name SITKA Nat. Cemetery

Reference No. 12000057 Multiple Name n/a

Solution:

See SLR

Nat/present > 50 Justified by Policy - OIC
PNL 3/2/11

Problem: Nat. Signif.

(see 12000056 for similar issues)

Crit. Consider. - cemeteries? less than 50?
POS - "-to present"

Also w/ the signif. dates listed should be the dates associated w/ the obj. + structures considered contributing - 1959, 72, 86, 87, 2003 + 2009.

Resolution:

SLR: Yes No

Database Change:

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section _____ Page _____

=====

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 12000057 Date Listed: 3/7/2012

Sitka National Cemetery
Property Name

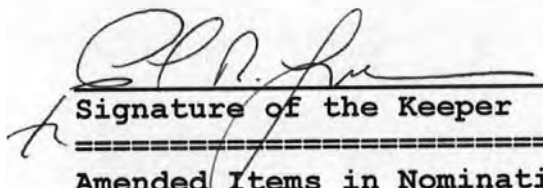
Sitka
County

AK
State

N/A

Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.


Signature of the Keeper

3/7/12
Date of Action

=====

Amended Items in Nomination:

Description:

The Materials block is amended to add: *Marble, Concrete, and Stone under Other Materials.*

Significance:

Criteria Considerations D and G should be checked.
[The Fort Richardson cemetery meets the criteria for listing as a property of exceptional importance for its association with the development of a national system of military/veterans cemeteries. The nomination takes into consideration the ongoing role and exceptional importance of national cemeteries as public places of commemoration and honor. The National Register has determined that the "present" is the end date most consistent with the Congressional intent of the federal laws establishing the national cemeteries and with the National Register policies for evaluating properties of continuing exceptional importance.]

These clarifications were confirmed with the VA FPO office.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Sitka National Cemetery

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ALASKA, Sitka

DATE RECEIVED: 1/20/12 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 2/21/12
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 3/07/12 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/09/12
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 12000057

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: Y
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: Y NATIONAL: Y

COMMENT WAIVER: N

___ACCEPT ___RETURN ___REJECT _____DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

The Sitka National Cemetery meets the criteria for listing in the National Register under Criterion A in the areas of Military History and Politics/Government at the national level. First established in 1867-1868 at the beginning of the U.S. government's presence in Sitka, the cemetery is a property of exceptional importance for its association with the development of the national system of military/veterans cemeteries. The nomination takes into consideration the ongoing role and exceptional importance of national cemeteries as public places of commemoration and honor. The National Register has determined that the "present" is the end date most consistent with the Congressional intent of the federal laws establishing the national cemeteries and with the National Register policies for evaluating properties of continuing exceptional importance.

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept Criterion A

REVIEWER Paul R. Lusignea DISCIPLINE HISTORIAN

TELEPHONE _____ DATE 3/7/2012

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



Sitka National Cemetery

Sitka, AK

Photo 2 of 26



DORIS E
YAW
1918-1944

SEC

Sitka National Cemetery

Sitka, AK

Photo 3 of 26

Ritz, R0607, 02/19/10

3341, #photo_3_0006



Sitka National Cemetery

Sitka, AK

Photo 4 of 26

RITZ, ROBERT, 02/19/10

2341, photo_4_0007



Sitka National Cemetery

Sitka, AK

Photo 5 of 26



Sitka National Cemetery

Sitka, AK

Photo 6 of 26

Ritz, R0607, 02/19/18

3341, #photo6_0004



Sitka National Cemetery
Sitka, AK
Photo 7 of 26

Ritz, R0607, 02/19/10

3341, #photo_7_0002



Sitka National Cemetery
Sitka, AK
Photo 8 of 26

Ritz, R0607, 02/19/10

2341, #photo_8_0001



Sitka National Cemetery

Sitka, AK

Photo 9 of 26

Ritz, R0607, 02/19/10

2341, #photo_9_0003



JOHN EZEK SWANN
1848 1898
MANUFACTURER
ROPERVILLE GA
1877 1898

Sitka National Cemetery
Sitka, AK
Photo 10 of 26

Ritz, R0607, 02/19/10

2341, photo_10_0024 ,



Sitka National Cemetery

Sitka, AK

Photo 11 of 26

Ritz, R0607, 02/19/10

3341, Photo-11-0025



Sitka National Cemetery
Sitka, AK
Photo 12 of 26

Ritz, R0607, 02/19/10

3341, #photo_12_0023

NATIONAL
CEMETERY



Sitka National Cemetery

Sitka, AK

Photo 13 of 26

Ritz, R0607, 02/19/10

3341, Photo_13_0002



Sitka National Cemetery
Sitka, AK
Photo 14 of 26

Ritz, R0607, 02/19/10

3341, photo_14_0020



Sitka National Cemetery
Sitka, AK

Photo 15 of 26

Ritz, RO607, 02/19/10

3341, Photo_15_0021



Sitka National Cemetery
Sitka, AK

Photo 16 of 26

Ritz, R0607, 02/19/10

3341, Photo_16_0019



Sitka National Cemetery

Sitka, AK

Photo 17 of 26

Ritz, R0607, 02/19/10

3341, Photo-17-0017

From *The Bivouac of the Dead*
By Theodore O'Hara

The muffled drum's sad roll has beat
The soldier's last tattoo;
No more on life's parade shall meet
That brave and fallen few.
On Fame's eternal camping-ground
Their silent tents are spread,
And Glory guards, with solemn round,
The bivouac of the dead.

Sitka National Cemetery

Sitka, AK

Photo 18 of 26



Sitka National Cemetery
Sitka, AK
Photo 19 of 26

Ritz, RO607, 02/19/10

3341, #photo_19_0015



Sitka National Cemetery
Sitka, AK
Photo 20 of 26

Ritz, R0607, 02/19/10

3341, Photo_20_0014



Sitka National Cemetery

Sitka, AK

Photo 21 of 26

Ritz, R0607, 02/19/10

3341, #photo_21_0013



CHARLES
WILLIAM
PADDOCK

CALIFORNIA

CAPTAIN
US MARINE CORPS
WORLD WAR II

AUGUST 11 1900
JULY 21 1943

Sitka National Cemetery

Sitka, AK

Photo 22 of 26



Sitka National Cemetery
Sitka, AK
Photo 23 of 26

Ritz, R0607, 02/19/18

3341, photo_23_0011



WILL COULT
COULT
2ND US ARTY

Sitka National Cemetery

Sitka, AK

Photo 24 of 26



Sitka National Cemetery
Sitka, AK

Photo 25 of 26

Ritz, R0607, 02/19/10

3341, #photo_25_0009



Sitka National Cemetery

Sitka, AK

Photo 26 of 26

Ritz, R0607, 02/19/10

3341, Photo_26_0008

Missing Core Documentation

Property Name

Sitka National Cemetery

County, State

Sitka, AK

Reference Number

12000057

The following Core Documentation is missing from this entry:

Nomination Form

Photographs (#1)

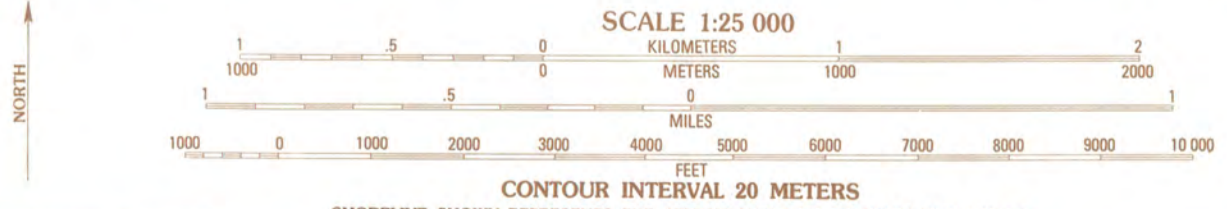
USGS Map



Sitka National Cemetery
UTM
8 4806803 63231306A

PRODUCED BY THE UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
CONTROL BY USGS, NOS/NOAA
COMPILED FROM AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN 1982
FIELD CHECKED 1983. MAP EDITED 1987
PROJECTION UNIVERSAL TRANSVERSE MERCATOR
GRID 1000-METER UNIVERSAL TRANSVERSE MERCATOR ZONE 8
10,000-FOOT STATE GRID TICKS ALASKA, ZONE 1
UTM GRID DECLINATION 0°13' EAST
1987 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION 27° EAST
VERTICAL DATUM NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
HORIZONTAL DATUM 1927 NORTH AMERICAN DATUM

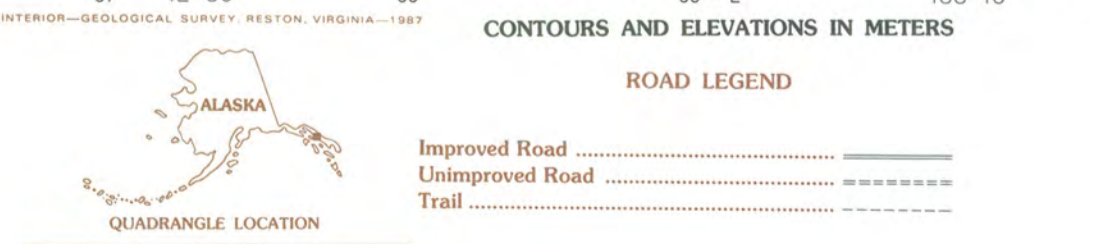
To place on the predicted North American Datum of 1983, move the projection lines as shown by dashed corner ticks (42 meters north and 108 meters east).
Gray land lines represent unsurveyed and unmarked locations predetermined by the Bureau of Land Management, Folio CR-12, Copper River Meridian.
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of any The Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge consists of all the public land in the coastal waters and adjacent seas of Alaska consisting of islands, islets, rocks, reefs, capes and spires, as well as designated mainland areas.
Entire land area is within the Tongass National Forest except Sitka exclusion area.



PROVISIONAL MAP
Produced from original manuscript drawings. Information shown as of date of photography.

CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 METERS
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 2.3 METERS
CONTROL ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.1 METER
OTHER ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST METER
To convert meters to feet multiply by 3.2808
To convert feet to meters multiply by .3048

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99701 DENVER, COLORADO 80225 OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092



ROAD LEGEND

Improved Road
Unimproved Road
Trail

1	2	3	1 Sitka (A-5) NE
2	3	4	2 Sitka (A-4) NW
3	4	5	3 Sitka (A-4) NE
4	5	6	4 Sitka (A-5) SE
5	6	7	5 Sitka (A-4) SE
6	7	8	6 Port Alexander (D-5) NE
7	8		7 Port Alexander (D-4) NW
8			8 Port Alexander (D-4) NE

ADJOINING 7.5' QUADRANGLE NAMES

SITKA (A-4) SW, ALASKA
PROVISIONAL EDITION 1987
57135-A2-TM-025

STATE OF ALASKA

SEAN PARNELL, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

DIVISION OF PARKS & OUTDOOR RECREATION OFFICE OF HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

550 WEST 7TH AVENUE, SUITE 1310
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501-3565

PHONE: (907) 269-8721

FAX: (907) 269-8908

November 22 , 2011

Re: 3330-1-2 Sitka National Cemetery
3330-1-2 Fort Richardson National Cemetery

Kathleen Schamel, Federal Preservation Officer
Office of Construction and Facilities Management (OOCFM1)
Department of Veterans Affairs
425 I Street, NW, 6th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Ms. Schamel:

I reviewed the National Register of Historic Places documentation for the two national cemeteries in Alaska, at Sitka and Fort Richardson, and discussed it with members of my staff. I concur both cemeteries qualify for listing in the National Register under criterion A, for properties associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. I have addressed each separately below.

Sitka National Cemetery.

Criterion:	A (associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history)
Criteria considerations:	none
Areas of significance:	military, politics/government
Period of significance:	1867-present
Significant dates:	*see discussion below
Level of significance:	national
Number of resources:	contributing: 1 building, 1 site, 2 structures, 7 objects non-contributing: 0
Historic function:	funerary/cemetery
Current function:	funerary/cemetery

Site number: Please add in section 1, under other names/site number, AHRS SIT-00023. In section 2, the cemetery is within the boundaries of the City and Borough of Sitka and vicinity should not be checked.

Significant dates: The reviewers disagreed with the significant dates identified in the nomination. They recommend 1867 (the year the first burial occurred in the cemetery), 1868 (the year the Army created the cemetery), 1890 (the President's executive order affecting the

cemetery), 1924 (the year it was designated a national cemetery), and 1973 (Cemetery Act that created the present boundaries). These differ from those identified, and the reviewers could not determine why 1870, 1927 are identified.

Site plan: The reviewers could not find section 1 in the new cemetery area on the site plan. They asked what MA and CIV are, and recommended a key be added to the site plan. They thought it also would be helpful to add a table that relates the contributing resources to the site plan.

Historical information:

On page 8.5: The Army left Sitka in 1877, but the Navy did not arrive until 1880. During the intervening years the Collector of Customs was the U.S. Government's defacto administrator of Alaska. Also, Sheldon Jackson school was called the Sitka Industrial Training School, not Sheldon Jackson initially, and I would take out "of New York" because the mission society was headquartered in Philadelphia.

On page 8.8.: The fort was Gibbon not Gibson. And on page 8.14: Baranof Island is spelled with only one "f".

Reviewers noted a gap in the chronology. They asked if the cemetery was taken care of by the Army troops, stationed at Sitka again in 1939 until the end of World War II.

Fort Richardson National Cemetery:

Criterion:	A (associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history)
Criteria considerations:	none
Areas of significance:	military, politics/government, ethnic heritage: Asian
Period of significance:	*see discussion below
Significant dates:	*see discussion below
Level of significance:	national
Number of resources:	contributing: 6 buildings, 1 site, 1 structure, 3 objects non-contributing: 0
Historic function:	funerary/cemetery
Current function:	funerary/cemetery

Site number: Please add in section 1, under other names/site number ANC-00013.

Address: on the cover page, section 2, the cemetery address is different from that stated in the first sentence of the narrative on page 7.1. Also the cemetery is within Fort Richardson and vicinity should not be checked in section 2.

Kathleen Schamel
November 22, 2011
Page 3

Period of significance: The summary in section 8 says the period of significance starts ca. 1946. The narrative makes the case for starting the period of significance in 1942 and the reviewers recommend that be the starting date.

Significant dates: As with the Sitka cemetery nomination, staff had questions about the dates identified. They recommend 1942 (the year the first burial occurred in the cemetery), 1947 (temporary cemetery made permanent by presidential order), 1951 (entrance posts constructed), 1953 (Japanese reburial), 1964 (Japanese ceremony and monument placed), and 1984 (designated a national cemetery). The reviewers did not think 1981 and 2002 should be identified as significant dates.

Historical information:

On page 8.6: It is Wilds P. (for Preston) Richardson not B.

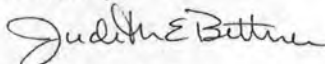
On page 8.8: After the Battle of Attu it was several months not several weeks later that the Allies reoccupied Kiska.

Bibliography: The list cites *Building Alaska with the U.S. Army* twice, and differently. These correctly should be the first and second editions.

I have signed the nominations, but ask that you make the corrections recommended above or include a copy of this letter with each nomination when submitted to the Keeper of the National Register. If you make corrections, please provide revised copies of the pages to me for our nomination files. I am keeping the cds with photographs, assuming you have the files to make the copies for submission to the National Register. Guidance to correctly label the cd and number the photographs is at www.cr.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/photopolicy/index.htm.

Thank you for pursuing formal listing of the cemeteries in the National Register of Historic Places. If you wish to discuss these comments, please contact Joan (Jo) Antonson. Her direct telephone number is 907.269.8714 and e-mail is jo.antonson@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,



Judith E. Bittner
State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosures: 2 nomination packages



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Office of Construction & Facilities Management
Washington DC 20420



January 12, 2012

Mr. Paul Loether
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
8th Floor
1201 Eye St. NW
Washington DC. 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

Please find enclosed nominations for Sitka National Cemetery (Alaska), Fort Richardson National Cemetery (Alaska) and Fort McPherson National Cemetery (Nebraska). All three nominations were sent to the appropriate State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPO) in September 2011. Additionally the nominations were sent to the chief elected local officials of the county (or equivalent government unit) and municipal political jurisdiction in which the property is located, as well as Certified Local Governments for comment.

The Alaska SHPO signed both nominations but requested that a number of changes be made to the nominations. The majority of the changes were made. Included is a copy of the Alaska SHPO's letter along with a memo detailing what changes were made and those that were deemed not appropriate.

An employee of the Nebraska SHPO sent an email on October 20, 2011, stating that the nomination for the Fort McPherson National Cemetery would likely be presented at the January 2012 meeting of the state review board. As the 45 days review period permitted by has long passed, we are submitting the nomination without the Nebraska SHPO's signature.

We received no comments from other interested parties.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the nominations, please contact Jennifer Perunko, Historian, National Cemetery Administration at 202/632-5441 or jennifer.perunko@va.gov.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Schamel
Federal Preservation Officer

Enclosures

Fairdale Shoppes
2355 Fairview Ave N
Roseville, MN 55113
651-635-0636 Tel
651-635-0628 Fax
Monday - Friday 8am-8pm
Saturday 9am-5pm



Fax Cover

To: NATIONAL PARK SERVICE Fax: 202-371-6447

Date: MARCH 7TH 2012 # of pages (w/cover): 10

From: MARC JESSUP Phone#: _____

Subject: NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES; NOTIFICATION OF PENDING NOMINATIONS AND RELATED ACTIONS, 77 Fed. Reg. 34, 9960-61 (FEBRUARY 21, 2012):

COMMENT LETTER:
SITKA NATIONAL CEMETERY

March 2, 2012

Marc D. Jessup
611 County Road B East
Maplewood, Minnesota 55117
651-492-2062
marc.jessup@wmitchell.edu

National Register of Historic Places,
National Park Service
1201 Eye St. NW., 8th floor
Washington DC 20005
Fax: 202-371-6447

RE: National Register of Historic Places; Notification of Pending Nominations and Related Actions, 77 Fed. Reg. 34, 9960-61 (February 21, 2012): **SITKA NATIONAL CEMETERY, SITKA ALASKA**

Alaska's oldest national cemetery – Sitka National Cemetery – deserves recognition on the National Register of Historic Places. Although cemeteries are not ordinarily considered for placement on the Register, Sitka National Cemetery meets the exception criteria for cemeteries. 36 CFR 60.4(c) (2011). Sitka National Cemetery derives its primary importance from its age, from its association with historic events, and from the significant people who are buried there. For those reasons it deserves to be recognized on the National Register of Historic Places. *Id.*

Background

Located on the southern tail of Alaska, the city of Sitka is on an island, accessible only by water or air transport. Sitka National Cemetery is located approximately one and a half miles east of the city of Sitka and overlooks the Sitka Sound leading into the Gulf of Alaska. Due to its location, caskets are generally flown in to Sitka for burial along with honor guard from the respective military branch to perform the military honors for the burial ceremony. The Sitka National Cemetery, one of only two national cemeteries in Alaska, contains 1149 graves (at the time of this letter), approximately 75% of which are service members. Significant people buried at Sitka National Cemetery include the fifth Governor of Alaska, an Olympic Gold medalist, and Alaska's only Medal of Honor recipient.

The founding of the cemetery is very much tied to the origins of Alaska as a territory of the United States. Alaska was purchased from Russia in 1867. With no formal government structure in place, Alaska was loosely governed by the United States Military under the command of General Jefferson C. Davis (not the former president of the Confederacy). General Davis, needing a proper burial place for the men under his command, ordered the formal establishment of the cemetery sometime between 1868 and 1870. This makes Sitka National Cemetery one of the oldest National Cemeteries in the United States; the oldest are Cyprus Hills and Mill Springs National Cemeteries, both established in 1862.

Notable Persons

Sitka National Cemetery is the resting place of the fifth governor of the District of Alaska. Alaska as a United States District was established in 1884 when President Arthur appointed John Henry Kinkead as the first Governor and established the first Alaska District Court in Sitka. The fifth governor, James Green Brady, who governed the District of Alaska from 1897 to 1906 is buried in the cemetery.

Brady's life is a truly remarkable rags-to-riches story. Brady was born in New York City in 1848. After the death of his mother he took to living on the streets. At the time Brady was only 8 years old. At some point during this time Brady met Theodore Roosevelt Sr. (the father of President Theodore Roosevelt) who picked Brady off the streets and sent him on the orphan train, paying for his transportation. Brady was adopted by a family in Indiana and grew up there. Brady went on to attend Yale University, graduating in 1874. Four years later, at age 30, Brady moved to Alaska. Brady spent the next four decades of his life serving the people of Alaska. He worked as a minister, missionary, businessmen, and lawyer. In addition to his government service Brady established schools and businesses.

In 1878, the year he moved to Alaska, he co-founded Alaska's first higher learning institution—Alaska's Sheldon Jackson College. In 1884, Brady was appointed as one the Alaska's four territory commissioners. Brady continued in that role until 1889. In 1897 Brady was appointed Governor of Alaska by President McKinley. Brady served as the Governor of Alaska for three terms from 1897 until 1906, during his

governorship he was heralded as the first non-carpetbag governor for his steady commitment to Alaska and its citizens.

Sitka National Cemetery is also the resting place to two noteworthy Marines. Marine Corps Captain Charles William Paddock served in both World War I and World War II, he was also an extremely successful Olympic athlete and earning himself the nickname, "The World's Fastest Human." Paddock served as a Lieutenant in a Field Artillery division between 1918 and 1919 during World War I. After his World War I service Paddock attended the University of Southern California where he established himself as a runner. He participated in the 1920 Olympic Games in Antwerp Belgium and there won a gold medal in the 100 meter race and in the 100 meter relay race, as well as a silver medal in the 200 meter race. In 1922 he graduated from the University but continued running, breaking several world records. He again participated in the Olympic Games in Paris, France in 1924 where he won another silver medal in the 200 meter race.

Thereafter he retired from running and entered the newspaper business in California. He served as the vice president and eventually the general manager of the *Pasadena Star-News*, the *Pasadena Post*, and the *Long Beach Press-Telegram*. During World War II Paddock, now a Captain, served as a staff aid to Major General William P. Upshur. He died in this role in a plane crash with General Upshur in 1943.

The second noteworthy Marine buried at Sitka National Cemetery is Alaska-born Lieutenant Colonel Archie Van Winkle. Van Winkle was in every respect a Marine's Marine and a true American hero. Van Winkle joined the Marine Corps at the age of 16

on December 14, 1942. Incredibly, Van Winkle rose to the rank of Corporal just eight months after his enlistment. Shortly thereafter Van Winkle landed with the Marines at Guadalcanal. Surviving Guadalcanal, Van Winkle was promoted to Sergeant and entered combat once again in the Battle of Cape Gloucester in late December of 1943. At the time Van Winkle was only 18 years old. In late 1944 Sergeant Van Winkle entered the fray once again serving as a platoon sergeant during the battle of Peleliu.

Van Winkle received an honorable discharge from the Marine Corps in 1945 and pursued his studies at the University of Washington. In 1948 he re-enlisted in the Marine Corps, this time joining a reserve unit in Seattle. In 1950, Van Winkle's unit was mobilized and ordered to Korea where Van Winkle participated in the Inchon Landing in late August of 1950. In November of that year Van Winkle was promoted to the rank of Staff Sergeant. On November 2, 1950 Van Winkle was engaged in actions that led to his award of the Medal of Honor. In respect for this, it is more appropriate that his official citation be listed rather than merely a description given.

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a Platoon Sergeant in Company B, First Battalion, Seventh Marines, First Marine Division (Reinforced), in action against enemy aggressor forces in the vicinity of Sudong, Korea, on November 2, 1950. Immediately rallying the men in his area after a fanatical and numerically superior enemy force penetrated the center of the line under cover of darkness and pinned down the platoon with a devastating barrage of deadly, automatic weapons and grenade fire, Staff Sergeant Van Winkle boldly spearheaded a determined attack through withering fire against hostile frontal positions and, though he and all the others who charged with him were wounded, succeeded in enabling his platoon to gain the fire superiority and the opportunity to reorganize. Realizing that the left-flank squad was isolated from the rest of the unit, he rushed through forty yards of fierce enemy fire to reunite his troops despite an elbow wound which rendered one of his arms totally useless.

Severely wounded a second time when a direct hit in the chest from a hostile hand grenade caused serious and painful wounds, he staunchly refused evacuation and continued to shout orders and words of encouragement to his depleted and battered platoon. Finally carried from his position unconscious from shock and loss of blood, Staff Sergeant Van Winkle served to inspire all who observed him to heroic efforts in successfully repulsing the enemy attack. His superb leadership, valiant fighting spirit and unfaltering devotion to duty in the face of heavy odds reflect the highest credit upon himself and the United States Naval Service.

Van Winkle was subsequently evacuated to Japan and eventually returned to the United States where he returned to his reserve unit. In 1952 President Truman awarded Van Winkle the Medal of Honor. The following day, Van Winkle was commissioned as Second Lieutenant by then Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Lemuel C. Shepherd. Van Winkle continued to serve the Marine Corps between the wars and eventually rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in 1967. In 1968 Van Winkle was sent to Vietnam, and incredibly, as a Lieutenant Colonel, Van Winkle saw combat again on multiple occasions.

Finally in 1974, after nearly 32 years of service in the Marine Corps, Van Winkle retired. Van Winkle's medals included not only the Medal of Honor but the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Bronze Star with Combat "V" and a gold star, the Purple Heart, and many others. Van Winkle retired to his native home of Alaska and died there in 1986. Van Winkle is Alaska's only Medal of Honor recipient.

Conclusion

Sitka National Cemetery deserves inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. The criteria for inclusion of a cemetery in the National Register of Historic Places demands that, the cemetery "derives its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features, or from association with historic events." 36 CFR 60.4(c) (2011). Sitka National Cemetery easily meets three of those criteria. It is old – approximately 144 years old, making it one of the oldest National Cemeteries in existence. It is associated with historic events – the cemetery is tied to the purchase of Alaska and the early administration of the territory by the United States Military. Last, it contains the graves of three significant individuals – the fifth Governor of Alaska, a record setting Olympic athlete and Marine Corps veteran, and Alaska's only Medal of Honor recipient.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marc Jessup

SOURCES

Proposed Rulemaking:

> National Register of Historic Places; Notification of Pending Nominations and Related Actions, 77 Fed. Reg. 34, 9960-61 (February 21, 2012)

Selection Criteria:

> National Park Service, 36 C.F.R. § 60.4 (2011)

> United States Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), National Register Evaluation Criteria, <http://www.achp.gov/nrcriteria.html> (last visited March 2, 2012)

Cemetery History:

> United States Department of Veterans Affairs, Sitka National Cemetery, <http://www.cem.va.gov/CEM/cems/nchp/sitka.asp> (last visited March 2, 2012)

> Telephone and E-mail Interview, Virginia Walker, Director, Fort Richardson and Sitka National Cemeteries (March 2, 2012)

John Green Brady:

> Judith Ann Schiff, *Yalies in Alaska's History*, Yale Alumni Magazine, January/February 2009

> Ted C. Hinckley, *The Presbyterian Leadership in Pioneer Alaska*, The Journal of American History, Vol. 52 No. 4, 742, 749 (March 1966)

> United States Department of Veterans Affairs, Sitka National Cemetery, <http://www.cem.va.gov/CEM/cems/nchp/sitka.asp> (last visited March 2, 2012)

Charles William Paddock:

> *Charlie Paddock*; Hall of Fame, USA Track and Field, <http://www.usatf.org/HallOfFame/TF/showBio.asp?HOFIDs=127> (last visited March 2, 2012)

> *Charley Paddock*, Sports-Reference.com, <http://www.sports-reference.com/olympics/athletes/pa/charley-paddock-1.html> (March 2, 2012)

> United States Department of Veterans Affairs, Sitka National Cemetery, <http://www.cem.va.gov/CEM/cems/nchp/sitka.asp> (last visited March 2, 2012)

Archie Van Winkle:

> *Archie Van Winkle; Hall of Valor*, Military Times, <http://militarytimes.com/citations-medals-awards/recipient.php?recipientid=194> (last visited March 2, 2012)

> *Medal of Honor Memorial Tops Goal*, The University of Washington Alumni Magazine, June 2007
(<http://www.washington.edu/alumni/columns/june07/content/view/63/38/>)

> United States Department of Veterans Affairs, Sitka National Cemetery, <http://www.cem.va.gov/CEM/cems/nchp/sitka.asp> (last visited March 2, 2012)

> Home of Heros, http://homeofheroes.com/moh/states/1_states.html (last visited March 2, 2012)