



OUR STORY

This is the earliest recorded cemetery in Lexington to be organized, owned, and managed by African Americans. It began in 1869 and burials continued until 1976. The people here were important leaders in Lexington.

Like many private cemeteries it was not endowed, and with the death of its founding members in Union Benevolent Society No. 2 (from which the cemetery gets its name) the cemetery became urban wasteland and was declared abandoned on April 17, 1973. City government claimed ownership and surveyed graves in the cemetery in anticipation of planned development; the revelation of over 5000 sites precluded that use.

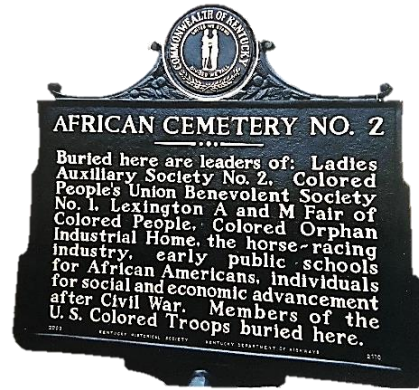
In March 1979, the Rev. H. H. Greene organized a nonprofit group as African Cemetery No. 2, Inc. to reclaim the landscape. The cemetery was cleaned and restored in 1980 and African Cemetery No. 2, Inc. was deeded the property in May 1981. The nonprofit was reorganized in 1995; restoration, historic preservation, and cultural activities have continued since. The site was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2004. It is the home of Lexington's longest running Juneteenth Celebration.

African Cemetery No. 2, Inc. is a tax-exempt non-profit 501 (c)(13) corporation. Contributions for maintenance and restoration are welcome.

African Cemetery No. 2, Inc.
PO Box 54874
Lexington KY 40555-4874
www.africancemeteryno2.org

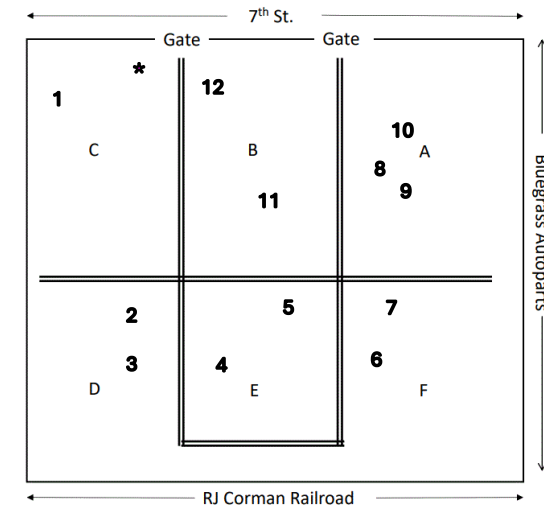
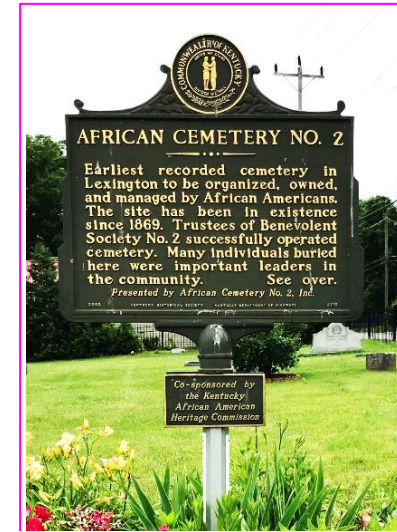
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Brochure Design by M.S. Coyne and Y. Giles

This is a 1,000-step walk.



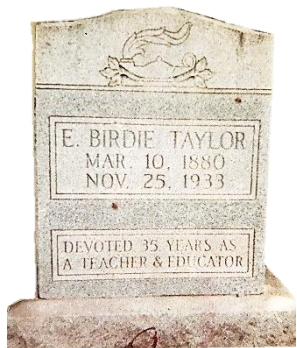
Women's Walk African Cemetery No. 2 Self-Guided Walking Tour

Begin at this point*



Rows are numbered left to right as you face 7th St.

Section C, Row 1



Stop #1
E. Birdie Taylor
Educator

The image on the marker of E. Birdie Taylor is a Betty Lamp, a symbol of learning that was adopted in 1926 by the American Home Economics Association. She was an educator for thirty-five years. In 1920 she was hired as State Supervisor for rural schools in sixty Eastern Kentucky counties.

E. Birdie began her career teaching at rural schools and was promoted to Supervisor of Fayette County Schools in 1913. She served as president in 1908 of the Colored Teachers Institute of Fayette County and as president of the Colored Orphan Home.

E. Birdie was married to Leon Wickliffe Taylor, a brother of Clara Taylor Perry. He was also an educator. They had one son, Leon, Jr.

Section D, Row 8



Stop #2
Emma Bailey
Caterer

Emma was married to Gratz Bailey, a photographer and native of Frankfort, KY. They lived in Lexington on Maryland Avenue. After his death Emma married John Shores, a barber of Georgetown, KY. After their divorce, Emma reverted to her first husband's surname. She was a caterer and daughter of Laura "Dolly" Johnson who

became Chef at the White House for President Benjamin Harrison in 1889. Johnson returned to Kentucky in 1894 where she met and married Ed Dandridge of Louisville. The couple opened restaurants in Lexington on South Limestone, South Upper and East Main Street, known as the White House Café.

Section B, Row 6



Stop #11
Mary A. Gillis
Colored Orphan Home

Mary Ann Nelson married John Gillis in 1864. She was a seamstress and John was an upholsterer. She was a 32-year member of First African Baptist Church, serving as a Sunday Schoolteacher. Mary was a co-founder of the orphan home in 1892 and of the St. Venus Temple, Sisters of the Mysterious Ten, women's affiliate of the United Brothers of Friendship.

Section B, Row 2



Stop #12
Charlotte Pogue
Matron, Colored Orphan Home

Charlotte and her husband Milton Pogue were first matron and superintendent from 1894 to 1900. Charlotte married Harvey H. Dowery about 1841. After his death, she married Milton Pogue in 1881. He died in 1911. His grave is unmarked.

Sources at the Lexington Public Library

Byars, Lauretta. *Lexington's Colored Orphan Industrial Home: Building for the Future*. 1995

Canellos, Peter S. *The Great Dissenter: The Story of John Marshall Harlan, America's Judicial Hero*. 2021

Giles, Yvonne. *Stilled Voices Yet Speak: A History of African Cemetery No.2 & Ladies Auxiliary Cemetery No.2*. 2009

Miller, Adrian. *The President's Kitchen Cabinet: The Story of African Americans Who Have Fed Our First Families from Washington to the Obamas*. 2017

Pollard, Madeline Valerie. *The Celebrated Trial of Madeline Pollard vs Breckinridge*. 1894

Section A, Row 3



Stop #9
Sarah Ann Gist

The great scandal of 1893 occurred when Madeline Pollard sued and won a judgement against William Campbell Preston Breckinridge for breach of promise to marry. Breckinridge agreed that Pollard had been his mistress and a “house of assignation” operated by Sarah Gist was one location where they met. Gist was among those providing testimony in the trial. The Gist family were enslaved by descendants of Christopher Gist a pioneer, surveyor, and friend of George Washington. Sarah, born in Alabama, was daughter of Kittie Gooldust (sp) and Andrew Gist, their enslaver. Other names on the marker are Taylor and Robert Dyer, Elizabeth, M. Hamlet Ballard, and Clay Ballard, her husband.



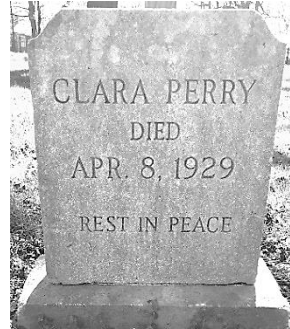
Section A, Row 5



Stop #10
Ella B. Gordon
cousin of poet Paul Laurence Dunbar

A descendant revealed the connection between the poet and Ella. John Burton, her father, was a brother of Matilda Burton Dunbar, Paul Laurence’s mother. Other siblings buried here are Alexander Burton and Ann Burton Scott. Ella’s mother, Maria H. Burton’s grave marker stands to the right. “After A Visit”, written by Dunbar in 1896, expressed his feelings about visits to his family.

Section D, Row 8



Stop #3
Clara Perry
Wife of a horse trainer

In 1880, Clara Taylor married Abraham Perry. Their granddaughters became talented musicians. America Lois Perry was buried in the cemetery in 1940 following her death in a train accident in Ohio. She was the older sister to Julia Perry born March 25, 1924, who became a nationally and internationally known composer and conductor. Julia’s music was performed by Lexington Philharmonic during their 2019 through 2023 seasons.

The adjacent archive panels provide more information about family members and a narrative of Abraham Perry’s career in the Thoroughbred industry.

Section E, Row 6



Stop #4
Mattie J. Byrd
Colored Orphan Home

Mattie, a seamstress, served in 1902 on the Board of Managers. She was a member of St. Paul AME Church and the St. Venus Temple, Sisters of the Mysterious Ten,

women's affiliate of the United Brothers of Friendship. Mattie was the daughter of Augustus “Gus” and Frances Buchanan whose grave marker stands in Section A, row 4. She married Joseph Byrd in 1881. Their two children did not survive them.

Katherine or “Kitty” Byrd was an incorporating member of the Colored Orphan Home in 1892 and served on the Board of Managers. She was married to Albert Byrd, brother of Joseph. Her name does not appear on any of the family markers, perhaps because she was the last of the family to have been buried here in September 1936.

Section E, Row 14



Stop #5

**Margaret B. Harlan
first Wife of Robert Harlan**

The 1840 marriage certificate of Margaret Sprouel and Robert Harlan indicated they were free persons of color. But it is known from a deed of emancipation that Robert did not become free until September 1848. Reportedly, Margaret gave birth to five children. Julia F. died in 1843 at the age of two and Julia died in 1849 at the age of three. Their mother, Margaret, died in 1850. Robert having gone to California during the gold rush, returned in 1850. He relocated with the remaining children to Ohio and in 1858 to Europe where he engaged in horse racing. He moved back to the United States following the Civil War and became a leader in Republican politics. Robert Harlan was linked to the family of John Marshall Harlan, the “Great Dissenter” of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Section F, Row 5



Stop #6

**Jane Saunders
Colored Orphan Home**

Twenty-four women organized the Colored Orphan Home in 1892. The home, opened in 1894, provided shelter and education for boys under nine and girls under ten. The house, standing on two acres, was destroyed by fire in 1912. The facility was rebuilt and reopened the following year. The orphanage closed in 1988.



Saunders’ marker states that she was a founder. She was a member of Asbury Methodist Church and St. Venus Temple, Sisters of the Mysterious Ten, an affiliate of the United Brothers of Friendship. Ten other women who were founders and employees are buried here.

Section F, Row 4



Stop #7

**Ella H. (Henderson) Walker
Educator**

Ella Smith, born in 1861 in Lexington, graduated from State University, Louisville, KY in 1883 and became a schoolteacher. Two years later, she married Rev. Hannibal Silvester Henderson, minister of St. Andrews Episcopal Church. He was also principal of the Fourth Street Colored School where she taught. They were parents of a son and daughter. Her husband and their 3-month-old son died in 1887. Ella furthered her education at the McDowell School of Arts and Sciences and Chicago Vocational School in Illinois and Oberlin University in Ohio. She became a sewing instructor at the Colored Orphan Home in 1894. Ella was Assistant Matron and Millinery Instructor at Kentucky Normal and Industrial Institute (now Kentucky State University). Rev. Henderson's marker is to the right; the marker of their son is in the row behind. She remarried in June 1902 to Jephthah Walker.

Section A, Row 1



Stop #8

**Elanora Lewis
Mother of jockey Oliver Lewis**

Elanora was the mother of ten children. Her oldest son, Oliver Lewis, won the first Kentucky Derby in 1875. Employed as a domestic servant, Elanora died at the age of fifty-six of a paralytic stroke in her home at 189 Spring Street in Lexington. Her son, William, is also identified on the marker. He gave his mother money, he had earned as a coal miner, to purchase her home. Prior to her death in 1894, she deeded the property to him.