Cemetery Documentation Project Guide

FamilySearch | THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

"We finally have the doctrine, the temples, and the technology for families to accomplish this glorious work of salvation."

ELDER QUENTIN L. COOK

General Conference April 2014

Taking photos of headstones for the BillionGraves website is a great project that lets youth use their special electronic talents to serve our Father's children who lived before. Imagine an activity where youth are asked to turn on their smart phones. The photos and information that they record may make it possible for descendants to find their ancestors and take their names to the temple.

How to Complete the Project

1. Set a goal.

2. Choose a cemetery.

3. Prepare the activity.

4. At the cemetery:

   a. Divide into teams.

   b. Take photos of the headstones.

   c. Share experiences.

5. Transcribe the information from the headstones.

1. Set a Goal

(You can have more than one goal.)

Here are some examples:

• This will be an Eagle Scout project.

• We need service hours for the Young Womanhood Recognition.

• I love family history. I think this would be fun, and helping others feels good.

• I have a friend or neighbor who might enjoy this activity who doesn't normally participate in our activities or meetings.

• I have a friend from another faith who might enjoy this activity.

• I think this project could help our ward or stake get excited about family history.

2. Choose a Cemetery

DECIDE WHAT TYPE OF CEMETERY YOU ARE LOOKING FOR

BillionGraves can help you find cemeteries in your area. Before you choose a cemetery, decide what you are looking for:

• Estimate how many volunteers might participate.

• Decide what size cemetery would be best for your volunteers.

• Decide what the maximum distance is that you are willing to travel.

• Decide what kind of layout and headstones would work best for your project.

• Select a date and time.

ESTIMATE THE NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

You can use this number to help you decide the size of cemetery you want to select, and you can also share the number when you contact cemetery personnel to arrange the activity.

DECIDE IF YOU NEED A LARGE OR SMALL CEMETERY

Tip from BillionGraves: Small cemeteries are very valuable because they tend to have unique information.

Choosing the right size cemetery is VERY important to maximize your time and to help your volunteers have a fun, stress-free, and rewarding activity.

• If you have 100 volunteers and choose a very small cemetery, people may get in each other's way or stand around without something to do.

• If you have 10 volunteers and choose a large cemetery, the project may take multiple trips to the cemetery.

Tip: Here are some examples of projects that may help you decide what size cemetery you want to look for:

• A project in Israel used 83 volunteers and took 3 hours to take 56,000 images.

• A project in Colorado used 16 volunteers and took 6 hours to take 23,000 images.

DECIDE WHAT LAYOUT AND TYPE OF HEADSTONES WOULD WORK BEST FOR YOUR PROJECT

• Does the layout make it easy to organize your volunteers? Some cemeteries are laid out in straight rows, while others may not seem to have any organization.

○ Cemeteries with straight rows are great for larger groups and for beginners. It is easier to make assignments. It is also easier to keep track of what the volunteers have photographed and what still needs to be photographed.

○ Cemeteries without uniform rows are better for smaller and more experienced groups where they can pay more attention to what headstones have been photographed. Not having uniform rows makes it more difficult to identify starting and stopping points.

• What types of headstones are in the cemetery? Think about the physical abilities of your volunteers.

○ Flat headstones on even ground are often the easiest to document, especially for older volunteers.

○ Upright headstones and odd shaped headstones are simple but often have information on the back and sides that needs to be photographed and linked together.

○ Military cemeteries with uniform upright headstones are much easier to document because they are the same every time.

○ Mausoleums and crypts are larger and take up a lot of space, so more movement is required to cover the same ground.

• Do you prefer a specific type of cemetery (public, private, historic, veteran, religious, military, and so on)?

DECIDE HOW FAR YOU ARE WILLING TO TRAVEL

• For large groups, make sure the cemetery is close to your volunteers.

SELECT A DATE AND TIME

Keep the following in mind as you select a date and time:

• Many cemeteries are closed on national holidays.

• Most cemeteries have burial services on weekends.

• Decide if you will take all the photos in one day or if you will return if needed.

• Check the local weather for the day. The ideal condition for taking photos is slightly overcast. The clouds keep you cool and minimize any potential shadows that may be cast on the headstones. However, sunny days are also good.

• If possible, arrange to have your project around noon to minimize shadows on upright headstones. To get a better photo, you can use an umbrella to shade a headstone from bright sun. You can use a flashlight or turn on your camera's flash to counteract shadows.

With this information, you are now ready to find the perfect cemetery for your project.

## USE BILLIONGRAVES TO IDENTIFY THE CEMETERIES IN YOUR AREA

1. At http://billiongraves.com/familysearch, create a free BillionGraves account. If you are already registered, log in.

2. After you log in, click **Tools**, and then click **Cemetery Map**.
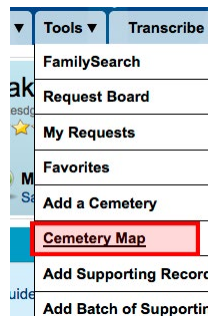
3. On the map, navigate to your area. Pins appear on the map marking cemeteries in your area. A legend at the bottom of the screen explains what the pin colors mean.
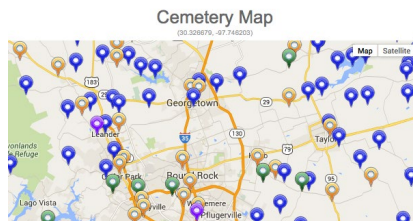

4. Click a pin to see the name of a cemetery.
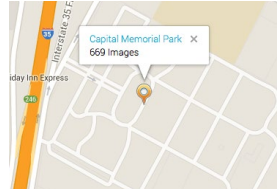
5. Click the name of the cemetery to see the cemetery's page and a map of the cemetery.
• The cemetery's page contains more information about the cemetery: address, contact phone number, website address, and historical information.
• On the map of the cemetery, pins within the cemetery indicate headstones that have been photographed.
• To decide if more work could be done, look at the location of the pins on the map and the number of images that have been taken.
• To see the organization of the headstones, in the upper right corner of the screen, click **Satellite** and enlarge the map.

Example: This is the page for Capital Memorial Park. Below the map, you can see that only 666 photos have been taken but 854 records have been transcribed. It probably means that more than one deceased person is listed on some of the headstones. The pins show that the photos were taken in a small section of the cemetery, so there is more work that could be done.
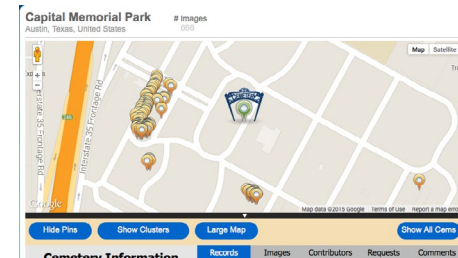
If you click the **Satellite** button in the upper right corner and enlarge the map, you can see that the headstones are in straight lines.
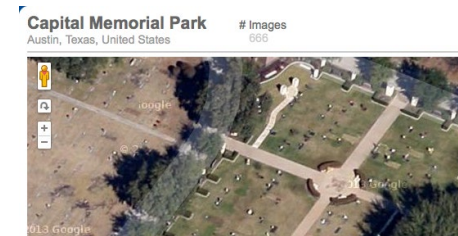
Tip: If you think the cemetery might be a good option for your project, record the name and contact information for the cemetery.

CONTACT THE CEMETERY

Use the contact information on the cemetery page on BillionGraves.com to contact the cemetery. If contact information is not provided, you can often find the information on the cemetery's website. If you find contact or website information, please update BillionGraves.com. This makes the information available to others.

Discuss the following information with cemetery personnel:
• Explain what BillionGraves is and that you will be taking photos of headstones to digitally preserve the records for genealogists around the world.
• If it is a private cemetery, ask permission to take photos of the headstones.

Important: In a public cemetery, you are not legally required to have permission to take photos, but you should let cemetery personnel know what you will be doing.

• Explain that the information will be preserved on BillionGraves.com and FamilySearch.org. Explain that the cemetery and public will have free access to the information online. (It helps to emphasize that the access is free.)
• Indicate that you will not disrupt any ceremonies and that your group will be respectful in the cemetery. If a graveside service is taking place, you will come back another day if necessary. If the cemetery is large, you could arrange to work in a different area while the service is performed and then return to the area to complete the photography.

• Find out their hours and other restrictions that may impact your project. (For example, are they closed holidays and Sundays?)
• Share the date and time you selected.
• Find out if there are any services scheduled for the day and time you would like to come.
• Find out if they have a cemetery map that you could get a copy of. (They may also have a map on their website.) If they want to know why you need a map, explain that it will be used to assign volunteers a section of the cemetery to photograph.
• You might ask them to share some history about the cemetery.

Tip from BillionGraves: It is usually better to have an adult either contact the cemetery or at least be present when the contact happens. If there are any issues with the cemetery management, contact BillionGraves at support@BillionGraves.com.

Now that you have successfully found a cemetery for your project, you're ready to plan the activity.

3. Plan the Activity

UNDERSTAND WHY AND HOW THE PROJECT IS DONE

• Watch the short video on the home page of BillionGraves.com that explains the importance of documenting cemeteries.

• At BillionGraves.com, click **Help** near the top of the page. They have a page with clear, short instructions, ideas for Eagle Scout projects, and links for downloading the app.

GET EXPERIENCE WITH THE BILLIONGRAVES APP

Before you go to the cemetery, register on BillionGraves, download the free app, and try taking one photo and uploading it to BillionGraves.

• To register for a free account, go to http://billiongraves.com/familysearch.

• You will receive a verification email from BillionGraves.com. You must verify your account to be able to take pictures using the app.

• Download the BillionGraves app from the App Store or Google Play. Type in **BillionGraves app**. Download the app, and enter your registration credentials, including the email address you verified.

• After you download the app, open it, and take one photo with the app. Then connect your phone to Wi-Fi, and upload the photo to BillionGraves.com.

> Uploading when you are connected to Wi-Fi saves on data usage and battery life.

The practice photo doesn't have to be a headstone. BillionGraves reviews all photos and will not post the photo.

DIVIDE THE CEMETERY

> Especially with larger cemeteries, the activity goes more smoothly if you divide the cemetery into smaller sections that you can assign to volunteers.

DIVIDE THE CEMETERY INTO SMALLER SECTIONS, AND CREATE MAPS FOR THE VOLUNTEERS

A simple way to divide the cemetery is to use the pre-existing sections that are built into the cemetery. Create copies of the cemetery map, and number each smaller section. Volunteers will use the maps to identify their assignment and mark what has been done.

When the volunteers complete a section, they can turn in the completed map and get another section to work on. This ensures that all of the cemetery is photographed and eliminates duplication. If you aren't able to complete the cemetery in one day, it is a huge benefit to know what has already been done and where to start.

You may be able to get a map from the cemetery. You can also use BillionGraves.com to print a map.
1. Go to the cemetery's page on BillionGraves.com. (Click **Search**. Click **Cemetery Lookup**. Search for the

cemetery's name. Click the cemetery's name in the search results.)
2. Make copies, and number the sections.

Example: These are maps of the Fort Logan National Cemetery in Denver, Colorado. The left map was printed from BillionGraves.com. The right map was on the VA website. The map on the right was used to create and number the sections for the volunteers.
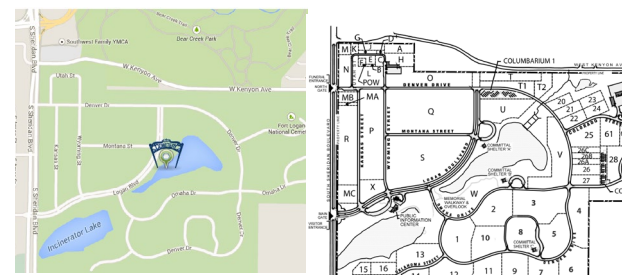
OTHER THINGS TO PLAN

• How volunteers will hear about the activity.

• How the volunteers will get to the cemetery. (Will individual volunteers arrange their own transportation? Will you meet and go as a group? Who will drive?)

• How volunteers will be trained. (Will you have an activity? Will you also have someone to train and assign volunteers at the cemetery?)

• If someone will take photos of the volunteers at work and write a report of the activity that might be appropriate for a local newspaper article or for a ward or stake history.

• How volunteers with special needs might participate. (Could they man the water station? Could they take

photos of the volunteers at work? Could they transcribe the information from the photos?)
• What items you need for the project at the cemetery and who will bring them.

WHAT TO BRING TO THE CEMETERY:

☐ Smartphones or tablets with GPS capabilities and the BillionGraves app. (To mark the location of each headstone, the device must have GPS. Click this link for a list of devices that BillionGraves recommends for their app: http://billiongraves.com/pages/help/devices.php.)

☐ If possible, a backup battery or a way to recharge phones.

☐ If possible, an extra phone or tablet for someone else to use.

☐ Sunblock or hats.

☐ Gardening gloves.

☐ Bottled drinking water. (Plan to take the empty bottles home).

☐ A first aid kit.

☐ A camera or phone to take photos of the activity for the ward or stake history.

☐ The assignment maps and pencils (to mark completed sections on the maps).

☐ Pennies (to mark headstones that need to be photographed on more than one side).

☐ Spray bottles with water (for misting headstones to improve contrast and clean off light dirt).

☐ Umbrellas (if it might rain or to shade a headstone in bright sunlight.)

☐ Flashlights (to illuminate headstones in shadows).

☐ Very soft bristled brushes (to wipe off the gravestones).

☐ Soft rags (to wipe off the gravestones).

IMPORTANT: Be careful your volunteers do not damage the headstones. You need to be especially gentle with older headstones. If you remove weeds that are in the way of the photo, be careful not to chip the headstones. Don't dig too deeply. Throw the weeds into a garbage bag to take out of the cemetery.

☐ Soft bristled brooms (to sweep flat headstones).

☐ A few trowels.

☐ Large garbage bags (for weeds and trash that you will remove).

☐ Optional. Some kind of food or snacks. Plan where you will eat them. Remember, you need to leave the cemetery clean.

PREPARE THE VOLUNTEERS

Decide how you will train the volunteers. Will you use a handout or hold an activity or both?

Here is information you could share with the volunteers:

• Explain the activity.
• Give contact information for the person in charge in case he or she has questions.
• List the date, time, and location of the activity and any details about group transportation.
• Include a list of things you would like them to bring to the cemetery.
• Let them know what you will have for them at the cemetery (water, trowels, and so on).
• Explain the reverence needed in a cemetery.
• You might explain how to clean headstones, how to take a good photo of a headstone, and how to

link photos.

Here are things they can do to prepare for the activity:

• Ask them to register at http://billiongraves.com/familysearch and to download the free BillionGraves app from the App Store or from Google Play.
• On the BillionGraves.com home page, watch the short video that explains why this activity is important.
• Take one photo with the BillionGraves app, and upload it to BillionGraves.com to make sure the app is connecting with BillionGraves.
• You might encourage them to try transcribing some of the tombstones that are already uploaded on BillionGraves.com.

4. At the Cemetery

REMIND THE VOLUNTEERS

Cemeteries are reverent places. People may be grieving or trying to feel close to loved ones. If a funeral service is being held, volunteers should work in other areas of the cemetery until the service is over and the participants are gone. If the cemetery is small, come back at another time.

Enjoy the activity, but don't shout to each other or laugh loudly. Others will be grateful for your respect and thoughtfulness. Being reverent also helps you feel the gratitude of the people you are helping.

TRAIN THE PHOTOGRAPHERS

• Explain that they do not have to tell BillionGraves where they are taking photos. The app knows where they are because of the GPS coordinates.

• Teach them how to take a good photo:

Tips from BillionGraves: For more information about each tip, go to http://blog.billiongraves.com/2013/02/7-ways-to-become-the-photographer-every-genealogist-loves/

  ○ Frame your photo so that the headstone fills up the frame without cutting off any of the headstone.
  ○ Take pictures at the correct angle (as straight on as possible.)
  ○ Link images that belong together.
  ○ Retake blurry photos.
  ○ Remove growth or decorations that interfere with the photo. (Be sure to replace the decorations.)
  ○ Make sure the lighting is right. (If the sun is too bright, use a blanket or umbrella to shade the headstone. If shadows make a headstone hard to read, use the flash on your camera, or shine a flashlight on the headstone.)
  ○ Review your images before you leave the cemetery. Retake any photos that aren't clear.

• Teach them how to link photos:
Linking photos indicates that the photos are related to the same headstone or family plot. Linking is easy. You take one photo, and before you take the related photo, you click the **link icon** on the screen. When the icon has a blue square around it, take the second photo. You can repeat this to link as many photos together as you need.

• Teach them when to link photos
  ○ If a headstone has information on both sides, link the two photos.
  ○ If a headstone is very large, take a picture of the whole headstone. Then click the **link icon**, and take a close-up of a section of the headstone. Click the **link icon** again, and take a photo of the next section. Continue until you capture all of the headstone.
  ○ If there is one large headstone with the family surname, take a photo of the large headstone, and then link the photos of the individual headstones to that photo. (This is especially important if the individual headstones have only first names.)
  ○ If a family plot is surrounded by stones or gates, take a photo of the entire plot, and then link the photos of the individual headstones to the plot photo.

• Teach them how to use the BillionGraves App to transcribe the information and then upload a photo. Do this only for headstones that do not photograph well.

IMPORTANT: Uploading can drain your phone or tablet, so BillionGraves strongly recommends that you wait until you can connect to BillionGraves.com on Wi-Fi before uploading all your photos.

However, sometimes you can't take a photo that lets you clearly see the information on a headstone. In that case, take the photo, and transcribe the information into the App while you can read the headstone, and then

upload the photo.

IMPORTANT: When transcribing with the app, you MUST transcribe the information before you upload the photo.

ADDITIONAL THINGS TO TEACH VOLUNTEERS

• Be careful not to damage the headstones. Be especially gentle with older headstones. If you remove weeds that are in the way of the photo, be careful not to chip the headstones. Don't dig too deeply. Throw the weeds into a garbage bag to take out of the cemetery.
• Do not use anything except water and a very soft bristle brush or soft cloth to clean a headstone. You may sweep flat headstones gently with a soft bristle broom.
• Watch for headstones of little children. Their headstones often don't line up with the rest of the family.
• If for some reason you are asked to leave the cemetery, respectfully address the person's concerns, and explain the reason for your presence. In a public cemetery, you have the legal right to take photos of the headstones in a respectful and appropriate manner. Each cemetery may have different policies regarding picture taking. If you have any issues with cemetery personnel about taking photos, please refer the person to BillionGraves.com or support@billiongraves.com. BillionGraves will be happy to work with them to clear up any misunderstandings.
• If the cemetery is privately funded, explain what you are doing and why, but leave if cemetery personnel request it. If you contacted the private cemetery before your activity, you can explain that you received permission for the activity.
• If anyone expresses concern over headstone photos and information being available on the Internet, explain that BillionGraves always respects the rights of the immediate family for privacy. After the headstones are posted, if a family member does not want to have their immediate family member's headstone displayed, BillionGraves.com is happy to remove the headstone from view. The person should contact support@billiongraves.com with the URL of the record in question.

ASSIGN VOLUNTEERS TO A SECTION

It helps the work go faster if a few volunteers can work together. Give each group a copy of the map, and show them which section they are assigned to. The group uses the map to locate their assignment and marks what they have photographed.

People working together can:
• Take photos of the headstones.
• Identify which standing headstones have information on both sides. Remember to link the photos of the two sides.
• Mark standing headstones that have information on both sides (put a penny on the top to signal that the headstone needs photos of the front and back).
• Gently remove weeds or decorations that interfere with the photo. Put back the decorations.
• Gently clean the headstones.
• Hold umbrellas or flashlights to improve the contrast in the photo.
• Gently spray a headstone with water to improve the contrast in the photo.

ENDING THE CEMETERY ACTIVITY

• The most important thing to do before you leave the cemetery is to have the photographers check all of their photos. Retake any that have fingers or feet in them or are blurry or too dark or too light.
• When you close the camera viewer, you'll see an upload button. Don't click it. Wait until you can connect to Wi-Fi to upload the photos.
• If you are going to have a snack at the end of the activity, plan where you are going to eat it. Remember not to leave wrappers or food remains in the cemetery. Don't fill up their garbage cans with things you have brought.
• You might want to let volunteers share experiences—such as the most unusual name, funniest epitaph, sweetest epitaph, and what they felt.
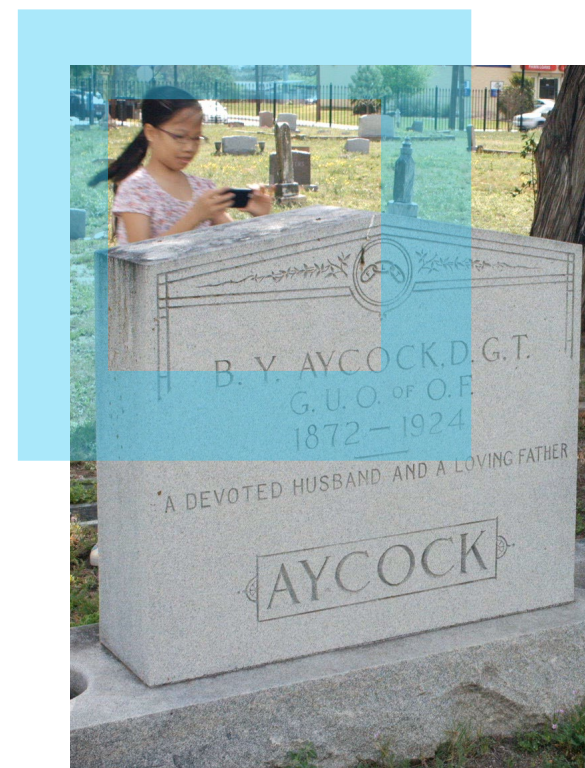
5. Uploading and Transcribing

UPLOAD THE PHOTOS FIRST

Before the information from the headstone can be transcribed, the photos have to be uploaded to BillionGraves.com. Remember, it is strongly recommended that the photographers connect to Wi-Fi before uploading the photos.

When you are connected to Wi-Fi, in the app, click the **Photos** button. Click the **Upload** button.

Important: If you have difficulty uploading photos, do not delete the BillionGraves app and re-install it. This will delete the photos from your device. Try turning off the device, sign in again, and upload the photos. For help, go to http://community.billiongraves.com.

TRANSCRIBE THE RECORDS

Transcribing is like indexing. The photo shows the information on the headstone. You type the information from the photo into a form on BillionGraves.com.

Follow these guidelines:
• You do not need to transcribe the same day that you take the photos.
• You have lots of ways to do the transcribing.
   ○ Volunteers can transcribe in their homes.
   ○ Some groups have an activity where the volunteers come and transcribe.
   ○ So everyone can participate, some wards invite other members to the Church to transcribe. This is a great way for people with limited mobility to participate.
• To find instructions for transcribing the information

from the headstones, go to BillionGraves.com, and click the **Help** link.
• Use the transcription form on BillionGraves.com.

IMPORTANT: When transcribing outside of the cemetery, do not use the app to transcribe the information. Go to BillionGraves.com, and click the **Transcribe** tab.
• For specific guidelines about transcribing information (for example, how to transcribe a maiden name), go to http://billiongraves.com/pages/help/howtotranscribe.php

Tip: To add another person to the same headstone, click the **Add New Individual Buried Here** tab.
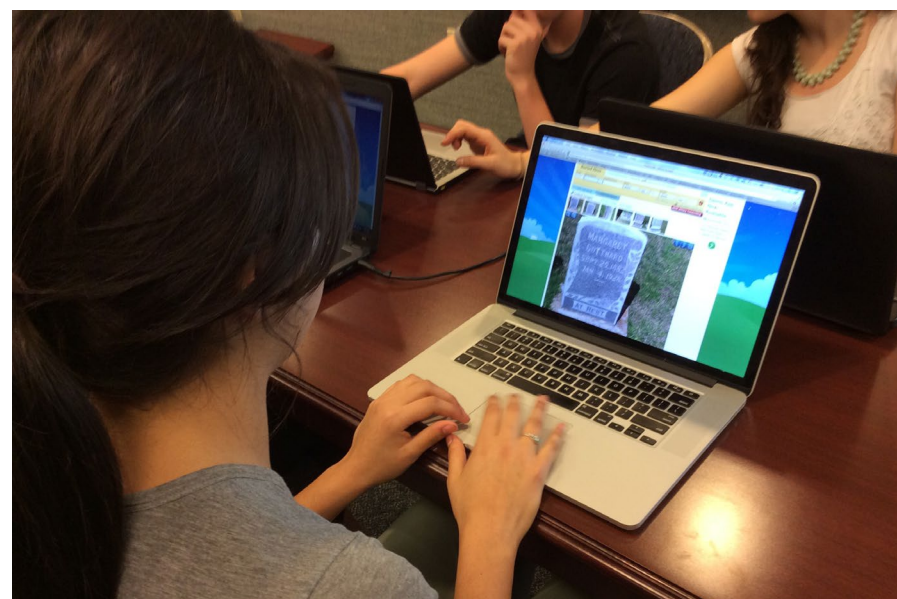
Appendix

IDEAS FOR LARGE GROUPS

Large groups may need more organization. Here are some ideas that might help.

ASSIGN KEY INDIVIDUALS TO HELP MANAGE TASKS WHILE IN THE CEMETERY

Assigning people to help is an important part of any successful project. This not only makes the project easier and more fun, but others are empowered with the skills they need to create their own project in the future! Some possible functions are listed below.

Project Leader: This person knows how to use the BillionGraves.com app, understands the specific project goals, and knows the cemetery. This person ensures that all the needs of the project are planned for, makes sure that all questions are answered, is the liaison to the cemetery (if needed), and keeps the group on track to meet their goal. The project leader may also advertise the project. This person also plans how the cemetery activity will end and how the photos will be transcribed.

Logistics Leader: This person can coordinate the volunteers' efforts at the cemetery. This person creates the maps that will be distributed to the volunteers, and at the cemetery, this person makes sure that volunteers are assigned to each section. The logistics leader keeps track of areas that have been completed and assigns the volunteers to new areas. This person could also watch to make sure the project does not interfere with services in the cemetery (and sends the volunteers to other areas of the cemetery if needed).

The logistics leader may want to organize the volunteers into small groups to complete the work. Two or more volunteers could work together to complete a section.

Tip: One volunteer can check the front and back of each standing headstone in a section. If the headstone has information on the front and back, the volunteer leaves a penny on top of the headstone as a signal that the photographer needs to take photos of both sides of the headstone.

Orienter: This person is an expert at using the BillionGraves app and is able to answer the volunteers questions about the app. (The orienter can learn from http://billiongraves.com/get_started.php and http://http://billiongraves.com/pages/faq/. Troubleshooting help is available on http://community.billiongraves.com.) The orienter is in charge of teaching new volunteers as they join the group. Most likely, not everyone will arrive at the start of the project. Having an orienter helps you keep on schedule by training new volunteers as they arrive and getting them caught up with the rest of the group. The orienter then hands the trained volunteers to the logistics leader for an area assignment. (One person can be the orienter and logistics leader, depending on the number of volunteers.)

Refreshments Coordinator: Everyone enjoys a quick break every now and again. Encourage volunteers to take breaks as they need to. Having someone that coordinates a snack or beverage will keep the group
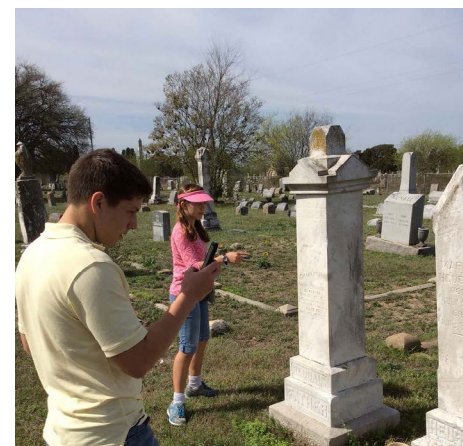
motivated and ready for more picture taking. For some remote locations, this can also be a great location for a charging station where users can recharge their device, grab a snack, and then head out for more photos. This person might also plan for a snack at the end of the activity and ensures that no paper wrappers, plastic bottles, or food remnants are left at the cemetery.

Historian: This person roams the cemetery, taking photos of the volunteers at work. He or she writes up a report of the activity that might be appropriate for a local newspaper article or for a ward or stake history.

LEADER'S CHECKLIST

Set a Goal

□ Our goals are (see page 4): _____

_____

_____

_____

Select a Cemetery

□ Day of the week, date, and starting time for the activity:

_____

□ If we don't finish the cemetery in one visit, date and time

we will return: _____

□ Estimated number of volunteers: _____

□ Additional things to consider when choosing a cemetery (See page 5.)

□ Cemetery size (large, medium, small) _____

□ Layout of headstones

□ Straight rows

□ Random

□ Type of cemetery (public, private, religious, military): _____

□ Distance to the cemetery. Maximum distance we are

willing to travel: _____

□ Transportation needed: _____

□ Cemeteries to consider. Use the **Cemetery Map** feature on BillionGraves.com. (See page 5.) List some cemeteries that might meet your needs and their address:

_____

_____

_____

□ Cemetery selected:

Cemetery name: _____

Phone number: _____

Address: _____

□ What to discuss when we contact the cemetery (See page 7.)

Tip from BillionGraves: It is usually better to have an adult either contact the cemetery or at least be present when the contact happens. If there are any issues with the cemetery management, contact BillionGraves.com.

□ Explain that we are going to take photos of the headstones.

□ For a private cemetery, ask permission to take the photos.

□ For a public cemetery, find out if they have policies about taking photos. Legally, we don't need permission to take photos, but we need to let cemetery personnel know about our plans.

□ Explain that the photos and information will be preserved on BillionGraves.com and FamilySearch.org and that they will have access to the information online.

□ Indicate that we will not disrupt any services and that our group will be respectful in the cemetery.

□ Make sure that our project will not interfere with services scheduled for that day.

□ Find out their hours and if they will be open the date and time we selected.

Their hours: _____

Our date and time: _____

□ Our estimated number of volunteers: _____

□ Ask if they have a cemetery map that we could get a copy of. (Do they have one on a website?) If they ask why, explain that it will be used to assign sections to the volunteers.

Plan the Activity

Learn about the activity. Here are some resources:

□ A short video on the home page of BillionGraves.com that explains the importance of this activity.

□ At BillionGraves.com, clear, brief instructions on the Help page. (Click **Help** near the top of the page.)

□ Try the BillionGraves app.

□ Register for a free account. Go to http://billiongraves. com/familysearch.

□ Download the BillionGraves app from the App Store or Google Play. Search for the BillionGraves app. Download the app, and enter my registration credentials.

□ Use the app to take a photo. Connect my phone to Wi-Fi, and upload the photo to make sure that I am connecting to BillionGraves.

□ Learn what the photographers will need to learn (see page 10).

□ As appropriate, plan for the following:

□ Create a cemetery map to organize the work. Volunteers use the map to identify their assignment and keep track of what has been done.

□ Who will make the maps? _____

□ Advertise the activity. (How will volunteers hear about the activity?) _____

_____

□ Plan transportation. (How will volunteers get to the cemetery? Will individual volunteers arrange their own transportation? Will we meet and go as a group? Who will drive?)_____

_____

□ Train volunteers. (Will we have an activity? Will we have a handout with instructions? Who will make the handout? Will someone at the cemetery also train volunteers and give assignments as they arrive?)_____

_____

□ Take photos of the volunteers at work, and write a report of the activity that might be appropriate for a local newspaper article or for a ward or stake history. _____

_____

□ Involve volunteers with special needs. (Could they man the water station? Could they take photos of the volunteers at work? Could they transcribe the information from the photos?) _____

□ Arrange to have the following items at the cemetery. How many do we need, and who will bring them?

□ Smartphones or tablets with GPS capabilities and the BillionGraves app. (See the list of devices that BillionGraves recommends for their app: http://billiongraves.com/pages/help/devices.php.)

□ If possible, a backup battery or a way to recharge phones.

□ If possible, an extra phone or tablet for someone else to use.

□ Sunblock or hats.

□ Gardening gloves.

□ Bottled drinking water. (Who will take the empty bottles home?)

□ A first aid kit.

□ A camera or phone to take photos of the activity for the ward or stake history.

□ The cemetery maps and pencils (to mark completed sections on the maps).

□ Pennies (to mark headstones that need to be photographed on more than one side).

□ Spray bottles with water (for misting headstones to improve contrast and clean off light dirt).

□ Umbrellas (if it might rain or to shade a headstone in bright sunlight.)

□ Flashlights (to illuminate headstones in shadows).

□ Very soft bristled brushes (to wipe off the gravestones).

□ Soft rags (to wipe off the gravestones).

□ Soft bristled brooms (to sweep flat headstones)

□ A few trowels.

IMPORTANT: Remember, we need to be careful not to damage the headstones, to be especially gentle with older headstones, to be careful removing weeds, and to take the weeds with us.)

□ Large garbage bags (for weeds and trash that we remove).

□ Other: _____

_____

□ Optional. Food or snacks at the end of the activity.

□ Optional. Plan to have volunteers share their experiences (tricks they learned, funniest name, sweetest epitaph, what they felt).

At the Cemetery

□ Instructions to share with the volunteers: _____

_____

_____

□ Plans for training volunteers who arrive late: _____

_____

_____

□ Before leaving, ask all photographers to review their photos and retake any that have fingers or feet, are blurry, are too light, or are too dark.

Upload the Photos

□ How and where the photographers will connect to Wi-Fi.

□ Upload the photos. (On BillionGraves.com, click the **Photos** button. Click the **Upload** button.)

Transcribe the Records

□ Who will do the transcribing (see page 12):_____

_____

_____

□ Where: _____

□ How we will give instructions about transcribing to the volunteers:_____

_____

Tip: Specific guidelines about transcribing information (for example, how to transcribe a maiden name) are at http://billiongraves.com/pages/help/howtotranscribe.php

SIMPLIFIED PROJECT CHECKLIST

□ Set goals. (What things will the activity accomplish.)

□ Set a date and time.

□ Select a cemetery.

□ Contact the cemetery.

□ Tell prospective volunteers about the activity.

□ Plan for the things you'll need at the cemetery.

□ Make a plan for training volunteers.

□ Optional. Plan for extra roles. (Will you have a trainer, a historian, an assignment for volunteers with special needs?)

□ Plan how volunteers will get to the cemetery.

□ Plan how you will make assignments at the cemetery.

□ Plan how you will end the cemetery activity.

□ Plan how the information will get transcribed.

VOLUNTEER EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

Bring the following items if you have them:

□ Gardening gloves.

□ Sunblock or a hat.

□ If you have one, a smartphone or tablet with GPS capabilities. (To run the BillionGraves app and mark the location of each headstone, the device must have GPS. Click this link to see a list of devices that BillionGraves recommends for their app: http://billiongraves.com/pages/help/devices.php)

□ If you have one, a backup battery.

□ If you have one, an extra phone for someone else to use.

□ Spray bottle with water (to mist headstones to improve contrast and clean off light dirt).

□ Umbrella (if it might rain or to shade a headstone in bright sunlight.)

□ Flashlight (to illuminate a headstone in shadows).

Good luck with your project!

FamilySearch

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JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS