

HUGUENOT CEMETERY - COQUINA PRESERVING THE PAST

Students learn how coquina stone has helped to preserve the history of early Floridians.

ACADEMIC OUTCOMES/LESSON OBJECTIVES:

- Students read selections introducing them to the information that coquina grave markers give us about Florida's past.

SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS ASSESSED:

- (SS.A.6.2.1) Understands reasons that immigrants came to Florida and the contributions of immigrants to the state's history.
- (SS.A.6.2.2) Understands the influence of geography on the history of Florida.
- (SS.B.1.2.1) Uses maps, globes, charts, graphs, and other geographic tools including map keys and symbols to gather and interpret data and to draw conclusions about physical patterns.

RESOURCES:

Florida Public Archaeology Network. 28 February 2008 <<http://www.flpublicarchaeology.org>>.

Harvey, Karen. Personal Interview. 6 February 2008.

Mitchell, Florence. A History of the Huguenot Cemetery 1821-1884, St. Augustine, Florida. St. Augustine, FL: The Friends of the Huguenot Cemetery, 1998.

Waters, Henry Fritz-Gilbert. "Genealogical Gleanings in England." The New England Historical and Genealogical Register. Vols. 37-52 (1896).

MATERIALS LIST:

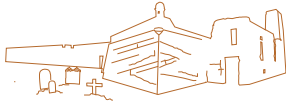
None

ANSWER KEY FOR ACTIVITY:

#56 stands for both coquina crosses. Each cross has a coquina footer to the right of the actual cross. So #56 has 4 tiny red marks, one header and footer to the east, and one header and footer to the west.



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STUDENT ARTICLES & ACTIVITIES:

1. History of the Huguenot Cemetery
2. Who is Buried at the Huguenot Cemetery?
3. How is Coquina Used at the Huguenot Cemetery?
4. Examples of Coquina Grave Markers
5. A Map of the Huguenot Cemetery
6. ACTIVITY: Find the Coquina Graves

VOCABULARY: Biodegrade, Border, Catholic, Cemetery, Consumption, Coquina, Epidemic, Footstone, Grave, Grave Rubbing, Headstone, Huguenot, Life Span, Protestant, Tourism, Vandalism, Yellow Fever

HOW CAN YOU VISIT THE HUGUENOT CEMETERY?

To set up a group tour of the Huguenot Cemetery, send an email to Karen Harvey at kharvey@aug.com.

ASSESSMENT OPTIONS:

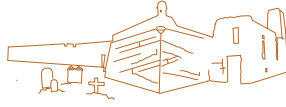
WRITING PROMPT #1: The Huguenot Cemetery gates are now locked due to problems with vandalism. Think about some other resource (natural or manmade) that has been damaged by vandalism. Write to explain how vandalism can affect you and other modern Floridians.

WRITING PROMPT #2: Many graves in the Huguenot Cemetery have no markers, so it can be difficult to discover a buried person's name, information about his life, or even the exact location of his grave. Think about how you would feel if no one in the future could learn about your life. Write to explain three things about your life that you would want people to remember.

ASSESSMENT #1: Based on the information in the article titled, "Who Was Buried at the Huguenot Cemetery?" what is the most common age at which these people died? For example, did they usually die in their 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s, or 90s? How does this lifespan compare to the average 78-year lifespan of Floridians today? Describe possible reasons for this difference in life spans.

ASSESSMENT #2: The article titled, "Who Was Buried at the Huguenot Cemetery?" provides eight different kinds of information about the people buried there. For example, we know something about the RELIGION of these people because only Protestants were buried in the Huguenot Cemetery. Review the article and create a list of at least five (5) other kinds of information this article gives us about the people buried there.





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WHY ARE WE STUDYING THE HUGUENOT CEMETERY?

By studying cemeteries, we can learn about important people, places, and events in Florida's history. For example, William Whilden was buried in the Huguenot Cemetery. He was one of the first people to die in a huge yellow fever epidemic that struck St. Augustine in the 1820s. Charles Bulow is buried there too. He owned Bulowville, one of the largest sugar plantations in Florida. You can also find a gravestone there for Eliza Whitehurst. She ran one of Florida's first hotels for tourists. While old newspapers are often lost or destroyed over time, stone grave markers last a very long time. As a result, they can teach us about important events in our state's history, including epidemics, slavery, and tourism.

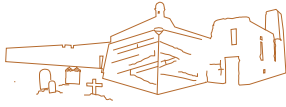
HISTORY OF THE HUGUENOT CEMETERY

The Huguenot Cemetery was created in 1821, when an epidemic of yellow fever struck the city of St. Augustine. Back then, people of different religions were buried in different graveyards. That meant people that belonged to Protestant religions could not be buried in the Catholic cemetery. Sometimes, people were buried on their family's land, in a private graveyard. But what about people who were just visiting? Many people who came to Florida were already sick with illnesses like consumption. They were hoping that Florida's warmer climate would cure them. But what if it didn't? If a Catholic stranger died, he could be buried in the Catholic cemetery. But what happened when a Protestant visitor died? He'd need a place to be buried too. **AND QUICK.** Visitors and residents were dying from yellow fever every day. In 1821, a minister named Andrew Fowler conducted 95 funerals in only two months.

So the city provided a half-acre of land to be used as a Protestant graveyard. The word "Huguenot" is a name that was used for French Protestants back in the 1500s. Even though there are no Huguenots buried in this cemetery, it probably got that name because only Protestants were buried here.

The cemetery was used from 1821 until 1884. It was finally closed because the people of St. Augustine were worried that disease would spread from the cemetery – which is located right in the middle of the city. After they closed the cemetery, they began to bury people farther away from St. Augustine's homes and businesses.

For many years, there were disagreements over who would take care of the old cemetery. Trees and plants needed to be trimmed, gravestones repaired, and security provided. Over the years, weather, plants, and vandalism damaged many of the grave markers. Today, the cemetery gate is locked to provide security for the old gravestones. A volunteer group, called "The Friends of the Huguenot Cemetery," works to protect and repair these important historical graves. They also provide guided tours for groups of all ages.



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WHO IS BURIED AT THE HUGUENOT CEMETERY?

According to city records, approximately 436 people are buried at the Protestant Huguenot Cemetery. Only a few grave markers are made from coquina. This list provides information about some of the people buried there. Most of them have coquina grave markers.

WILLIAM WHILDEN – He was 5-years-old when he died in an epidemic of yellow fever in 1823.

CAPTAIN ROBERT MICKLER – He was from St. Mary's, Georgia and was 48-years-old when he died in 1848.

CHARLES BULOW – He owned Bulowville Plantation and was 44-years-old when he died in 1823. His son built a coquina sugar mill on the Bulow property. This was one of the largest sugar plantations in Florida.

THOMAS DRYSDALE – He was 17-years-old when he died in October 1841.

ANN DRYSDALE – She was 21-years-old when she died in January 1844.

ELIZABETH MARY HANSON – She was 82-years-old when she died in 1838.

ELIZA WHITEHURST – She was 59-years-old when she died in 1838. She ran a boarding house (hotel) for visitors who were traveling through Florida. This boarding house was made from coquina!

HENRY THOMAS DUMMET – He owned the Dummet sugar plantation. Henry grew up in the West Indies. He was 64-years-old when he died in 1839.

ALFRED ARNOLD – He was born in Ironstone, Massachusetts and was 60-years-old when he died in 1880.

DR. ROBERTSON – He died in 1823. We don't know how old he was.

ANN ROBERTSON – Ann was Dr. Robertson's wife. She was from Inverness, Scotland and was 65-years-old when she died in 1850.

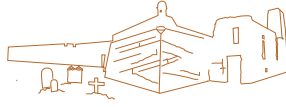
BIDDLECOOME SWEENEY – There are no records to tell us about his life.

ELLEN HASSELTINE – She was 46-years-old when she died in 1881.

OTIS HINCKLEY – He was 45-years-old when he died in 1877.

MARY PAGE HINCKLEY – Mary was Otis Hinckley's wife. She died one month after him during the same year, in 1877. She was 47-years-old.

Only wealthy people could afford stone markers. Many others could only afford wooden markers, which biodegrade (or rot away) over time. Most of the everyday workers couldn't afford any kind of grave marker, so we have no idea where their graves are located. A few free black people and slaves were also buried in this cemetery. Without markers, the locations of their graves are still a mystery.



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HOW IS COQUINA USED AT THE HUGUENOT CEMETERY?

Coquina is used in several ways at the Huguenot Cemetery. There is a stone wall that stretches around part of the cemetery. Some of this wall was built with coquina blocks. In the photo, the section of wall on the left (leading off into the distance) was made from coquina. Other wall sections were built from concrete or metal, like the wall that stretches toward the right side of the photo.

Coquina was also used inside the cemetery to mark the locations of actual graves. These coquina markers often had marble signs. Why? The marble signs were important because it's nearly impossible to carve names and dates into a shelly, bumpy stone like coquina. Some of the coquina markers don't have marble plaques. In these cases, we don't know who's buried there. So, why did people use coquina for gravestones? Why didn't they just stick with granite or marble? Well, granite and marble had to be ordered from far away. Coquina was available right in St. Augustine. So, the coquina gravestones are a good example of people using their natural resources!



Roadside View of Mala Compra Site During Conservation Efforts

What did these grave markers look like? Two of the markers are large coquina crosses. People didn't carve coquina into shapes very often (because it's so shelly and jagged). As far as historians can tell, these are the only two coquina crosses in the entire world.

There are no marble markers on the crosses, but each grave does have a footstone. And the small coquina footstones do have marble name markers. (See the photos on the next page for each kind of coquina grave marker.)

Another kind of carved marker is the obelisk. There are two coquina obelisks in this cemetery. An obelisk looks like a tall, narrow pyramid. A marble sign is posted on each one, giving the names of the buried people.

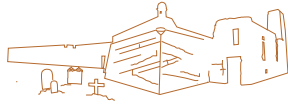
The most popular kind of coquina marker was the raised tomb. These large stone rectangles don't have people inside. The stones just sit on top of the grave, protecting it from animals, tree roots, and weather. Slabs of marble topped many of these raised tombs, providing plenty of space to tell about the person's life.

Coquina blocks were also used to create fences of stone and metal. These fences enclosed the graves of whole families who were buried close together. Sometimes, a marble sign was added to the fence to explain who was buried there. In other cases, a coquina fence survived even when the old wooden grave markers inside had disappeared.

Low coquina borders (shorter than fences) surround many of the Huguenot graves. These borders may enclose a single grave or a group of graves. They range from a few inches high to almost two feet high. The borders don't have marble markers, but the graves they surround usually do.

Because coquina is a very sturdy stone, these grave markers have lasted for 180 years, giving us clues about Florida's distant past. With the help of "The Friends of the Huguenot Cemetery," these grand old gravestones should last well into Florida's future.

Many people enjoy visiting old cemeteries and learning about history. In the past, making "grave rubbings" was a popular activity. What is a grave rubbing? It's when someone lays a piece of paper on top of a stone marker and uses a crayon or chalk to rub the surface of the paper. The gravestone's carved lettering is a little lower than the rest of the stone surface, so the rubbing action creates a kind of photocopy. It may sound fun, but today we know that grave-rubbings damage old gravestones. When YOU visit a cemetery, be sure to take photographs instead of making a grave rubbing. Anytime we touch or rub these old stones, we risk destroying a part of Florida's history.



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EXAMPLES OF COQUINA GRAVE MARKERS



Otis Hinckley's Coquina Cross (#56)



Captain Robert Mickler's Raised Tomb Marker (#5)



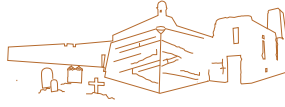
Biddlecome Sweeney's Coquina Obelisk Fence (#53)



Alfred Arnold's Obelisk (#45)



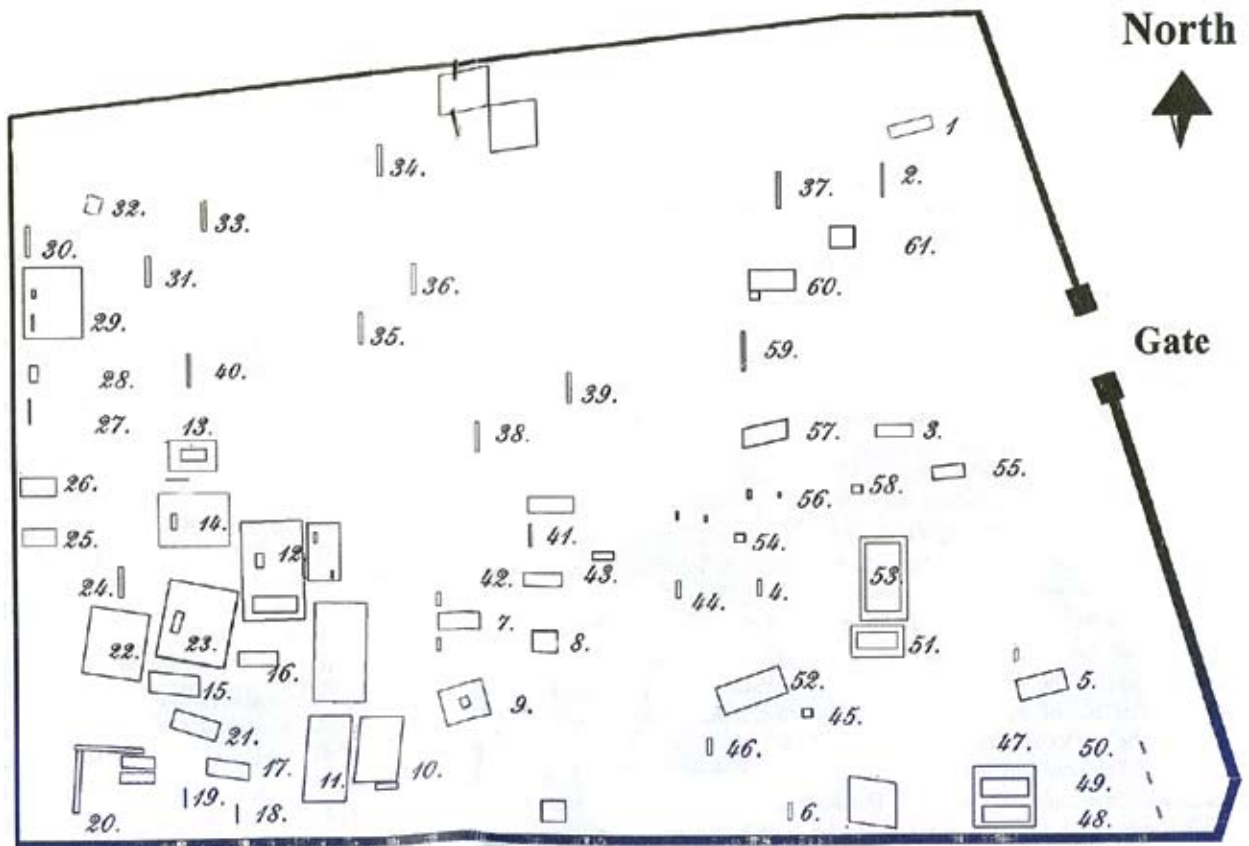
Elizabeth Mary Hanson's Coquina Border (#22)



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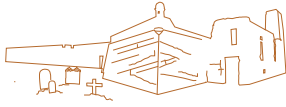
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A MAP OF THE HUGUENOT CEMETERY



COOL FACT:

Do you see all of the empty space on the Huguenot Cemetery map? It's not really empty. Historians have discovered the names of 436 people that are buried in this cemetery, but many of them had wooden grave markers (or no markers at all). Over the past 180 years, all of the wooden markers have disappeared. This makes it difficult to find out where the graves are actually located.



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ACTIVITY - FIND THE COQUINA GRAVES

DIRECTIONS: This list describes several grave markers found at the Huguenot Cemetery. Match each grave's number to its location on the map. Mark each COQUINA gravesite you find with a colored pencil.

- #3 WILLIAM WHILDEN – He has a raised coquina tomb marker.
- #5 CAPTAIN ROBERT MICKLER – He has a raised coquina tomb marker.
- #15 CHARLES BULOW – His raised tomb marker is NOT coquina. It's made of granite and marble. His grave is included on this list because he owned Bulowville Plantation. His son built a coquina sugar mill on the Bulow property.
- #20 THOMAS DRYSDALE – They have granite and marble raised tomb markers. There is a short coquina border (about a foot high) marking a square around their grave markers.
ANN DRYSDALE
- #22 ELIZABETH MARY HANSON – She has a raised brick tomb marker. There is a short coquina border (about 8 inches high) marking a square around it.
- #25 ELIZA WHITEHURST – She has a raised tomb marker. It is NOT made from coquina. Her grave is included on this list because she managed a coquina hotel in St. Augustine.
- #41 HENRY THOMAS DUMMET – He has a raised coquina tomb marker.
- #45 ALFRED ARNOLD – His marker is a coquina obelisk. This looks a bit like a tall narrow pyramid.
- #47 DR. ROBERTSON – They have raised coquina tomb markers and a beautifully curved metal gate around both graves.
His Wife ANN ROBERTSON
- #53 BIDDLECOOME SWEENEY – He has eight small obelisks around his grave that are connected by metal rods. This creates a unique fence.
- #54 ELLEN HASSELTINE – Her marker is a coquina obelisk. This looks a bit like a tall narrow pyramid.
- #56 OTIS HINCKLEY – They each have a large coquina cross to mark the head of their graves and a coquina footstone to mark the other end. These are the only coquina crosses in the world!
His wife MARY PAGE HINCKLEY