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Mobile County's Catholic Cemetery added to Alabama Historic Cemetery Register

The Alabama Historical Commission recently added Catholic Cemetery to the Alabama Historic Cemetery Register.

"The cemetery register is a prestigious listing of historic cemeteries in Alabama," said Lee Anne Wofford, cemetery program coordinator. "The AHC considers the notable historic cemeteries in this register to be particularly worthy of preservation and appreciation, and therefore deserving of this special recognition."

There are now thirty-four cemeteries in Mobile County on the Alabama Historic Cemetery Register, which features 320 cemeteries statewide.

In 1848, Archbishop Michael Portier purchased several acres for a cemetery to be used exclusively for Catholic burials. He designed the cemetery in a circular pattern with graves facing towards the center. The cemetery has been expanded many times over the years with some sections arranged in a grid pattern. The cemetery is 150 acres and has an estimated 20,000 graves with at least 100 new internments each year. The cemetery has exceptional funerary art and elaborate above-ground tombs and mausoleums. In 2006, a group of volunteers formed a non-profit group dedicated to the restoration and preservation of Catholic Cemetery.

The Alabama Historical Commission administers the Alabama Historic Cemetery Program that gives aid to the general public, government officials, civic groups, and others in identifying, documenting, registering, and conserving Alabama's historic cemeteries.

The Alabama Historic Cemetery Register officially recognizes and honors family and community cemeteries that were established at least 40 years ago.

Listing in the state cemetery register is an honorary designation imposing no restrictions on property owners. State law protects all cemeteries from willful desecration and destruction.

*To protect, preserve, and interpret Alabama's historic places is the mission of the **Alabama Historical Commission**, the **State Historic Preservation Office**.*

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