

Historical Designation for St. Peter's Cemetery

My family has resided in West Baltimore since 1842, when my 4xgreat grandfather Cornelius Knott left Montgomery County to make his own way in Baltimore. He was one of the earliest members of St. Peter the Apostle Church and at the time of his death in 1916 he was the oldest member of the congregation. Cornelius was a Baltimore City policeman during the Civil War, suffering broken bones at the hands of a mob in performing his duties and even rescued two children from a burning building in 1876. Predeceasing him were his wife Roselia (the great Father Edward McColgan married them) and his daughter's husband Joseph Lubbehusen, the latter dying in 1899 of consumption. All are buried in St. Peter's Cemetery. Cornelius is nearly the exact center of Section O according to the plot maps, although his headstone disappeared in the years that the cemetery was less cared-for. Joseph is unfortunately buried in a section that has become deeply wooded such that no family members can visit him. My interest in genealogy has prompted me to take several family members to the cemetery, who are all invariably disappointed that we can't even visit the full property without risking ticks and poison ivy.

I realize the complexities of a normal historical landmark designation and how that affects the upkeep and repairs of a building, but doing so for a cemetery where the upkeep would mainly be plant removal certainly seems less complicated and something the archdiocese could easily support. People's interest in ancestry draws them to visit cemeteries hoping to find family members - I know more of my Knott ancestors are there, as well as several Lubbehusens who also lived in the area and attended St. Peter's. I wish the cemetery were in a condition that I could honor them there, that I could take family members to teach them about these ancestors who were part of the building of Baltimore's greatest days. Historical landmark designation would go some distance to helping that happen not just for me, but for everyone who has family members buried there. At a time of long-standing deep divisions in Baltimore the improvement of a cemetery that still acts as the final resting place for multiple generations of Catholic Baltimoreans both black and white would certainly be a benefit to all.

BALTIMORE HERITAGE

WORKING TOGETHER TO PRESERVE AND PLAN BALTIMORE'S FUTURE
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May 12, 2025

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Johns W. Hopkins
Executive Director

The Honorable John Bullock
Baltimore City Council
100 Holliday Street
Room 503
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Re: Support for St. Peter's Cemetery Landmark Status

Dear Ms. Johnson:

I am writing to convey Baltimore Heritage's support for adding St. Peter's Cemetery to Baltimore's historic landmark list.

St. Peter's merits landmark designation. It began in 1851 for St. Peter The Apostle Church nearby in West Baltimore, a predominantly white Irish congregation. The cemetery was also the main burying ground for St. Peter Claver Church on Pennsylvania Avenue, a predominantly Black congregation. This unusual combination as the resting place for thousands of Black and white Baltimoreans makes the St. Peter's rich in intertwined Baltimore History

I urge your support for adding St. Peter's Cemetery to Baltimore's historic landmark list.

Sincerely,



Johns W. Hopkins
Executive Director

Dear Councilman Bullock,

My name is Dan Phelan. I am on the Board of Directors of the Baltimore County Genealogical Society (BCGS). The BCGS was founded in 1977 to help educate members in tracing their family ancestry, to collect and publish material related to genealogy, and to encourage the open exchange of genealogical ideas and experiences. We collect and maintain substantial records and materials for Baltimore City, the counties of Maryland, U.S. states and more. One of our primary concerns is scanning and conserving cemetery records.

I would like to voice my support for giving the Historic Landmark designation to St. Peter's Cemetery in West Baltimore. The cemetery predates the Civil War, and interments include descendants of multiple nationalities, along with both Blacks and Whites, which was uncommon for the time. Many of the souls buried in that cemetery were the Irish immigrant workers who built the B&O Railroad to its place of prominence in U.S. railroading.

Some decades ago, part of the cemetery was sold off and the Warwick Apartments were built on several sections of the cemetery. It is important that more development like that one does not further impinge on the cemetery grounds.

Thank you very much for your attention,

Dan Phelan

6007 Lakeview Rd.

Baltimore, MD 21210

djpphelan@gmail.com

410-377-9001

SAMUEL I. "SANDY" ROSENBERG

Legislative District 41
Baltimore City

Health and Government
Operations Committee

Chair

Government Operations and Long
Term Care Subcommittee

House Chair

Joint Committee on Administrative,
Executive, and Legislative Review



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

June 2, 2025

RESPOND TO OFFICE INDICATED

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6 Bladen Street, Room 365
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
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District Office

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Baltimore, Maryland 21207
410-664-2646 · Fax 410-367-4968

Councilman John T. Bullock

City Hall

Baltimore, MD 21201

Dear Councilman Bullock,

I visited St. Peter's Cemetery in December of 2024, and today I am writing to express my support for Historic Landmark Designation of St. Peter's Cemetery.

While the cemetery does need continued restoration, it is the burial ground for many that attended both St. Peter Claver and St. Peter the Apostle churches. These churches have been Historic Landmarks since 1982 - by CHAP for St. Peter Claver and since 1976 for the St. Peter the Apostle church complex (National Register of Historic Places) and 2009 by CHAP.

I am encouraged by the work of Jennifer Johnson, the Founder of Friends of St Peter's Cemetery. Jennifer grew up in the 41st District and still has strong family ties to my district. I think it is past time to correct this historical wrong and give St. Peter's Cemetery Historic Landmark Designation.

Thank you for bringing about positive change in our neighboring West Baltimore communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sandy Rosenberg".

Delegate Samuel I. Rosenberg

April 17, 2025

To Whom This May Concern:

My family's heritage in the United States starts with their arrival from Ireland in May 1847. They were fleeing the desperate conditions of "The Great Hunger", more commonly referred to as "The Potato Famine." They settled in West Baltimore and became part of the Irish Catholic community which developed into the Hollins Market area. Central to this community was the St. Peter the Apostle Church on Poppleton St. The church purchased 20 acres in 1850 and established St. Peter's Cemetery. It is estimated that over 15,000 internments for several cultural groups are there. I know of at least 6 of my family members who were buried here in the 1850's to 1880's and can easily speculate that there are more. My heritage is but one of thousands that make up the social history of Baltimore. Preservation of the Cemetery is preservation of significant part of Baltimore's history. A "Historic Landmark Designation" would recognize the value and importance of the Cemetery and provide an important protection for the future.

Thank-you for your consideration.

Don Gavin

49 Tivoli Gardens

Tivoli, NY 12583

Dear Councilman Bullock,

I'm Vice-President for History of the Agnes Kane Callum (Baltimore) Chapter of the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society, a national organization dedicated to researching and preserving family history. Therefore, I am in complete support of Jennifer Johnson's efforts to restore Baltimore's St. Peter's Cemetery. I also believe the cemetery is worthy of Historic Landmark Designation. Any thing you can do to facilitate these efforts will be appreciated.

Sincerely,

Donna Tyler Hollie, Ph.D.

2814 Taney Road

Baltimore MD 21209

24 April 2025

May 12, 2025

John T. Bullock - District 9
100 Holliday Street
Room 503
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Dear Councilman Bullock,

As you know, historic preservation is vital to the city of Baltimore. It is especially near and dear to the residents of the Evergreen Protective Association, located in the Evergreen-Lawn Community where I, Monica R. J. Bland, serves as President.

Your dedication to retaining the rich history of our neighborhood, and others located in the 9th district where you serve, is greatly appreciated and your advocacy to make sure it is available for future generations does not go unnoticed.

I was overjoyed after seeing the incredible work carried out by Jennifer Johnson, the Founder of Friends of St Peter's Cemetery, located St. Peter's Cemetery at 1301 Moreland Ave. Baltimore MD 21216, less than a mile north of the Evergreen-Lawn.

I grew up in the Winchester Apartments on the south border of the cemetery. To this day, it reminds me of many precious memories of my childhood.

As a youth volunteer, I had the opportunity to take a group of youth on a tour of the cemetery and we were amazed at the names and dates of people buried there. So much history.

That one visit had a tremendous impact on me. The work that has taken place at St. Peter's Cemetery served as inspiration for work I've done in the past few years at the Old Field Cemetery located in Dorchester County on the Eastern Shore.

For the sake of present and future generations, we are supportive of the Historic Landmark Designation of St. Peter's Cemetery and hope you will bring this designation to fruition in this 174th year of the existence of the cemetery.

Sincerely,

Monica R. J. Bland
President
Evergreen Protective Association
Evergrowing! Ever Great! Evergreen!
Our Roots Run Deep

Friends of St. Peter's Cemetery

Cemetery Address

1301 Moreland Ave
Baltimore MD 21216

John T. Bullock - District 9
100 Holliday Street
Room 503
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

[May 12, 2025](#)

Dear Councilman Bullock,

The Quest for Historic Landmark Designation

We met initially in 2023 when I organized a community meeting to discuss Historic Landmark Designation of St. Peter's Cemetery. It is now 2025.

It is also 16 years after CHAP gave the St. Peter the Apostle Church complex a historic landmark designation. It is 43 years after the local historic landmark designation of St. Peter Claver and is 49 years after the St Peter the Apostle church complex received national landmark designation and it is 174 years after St. Peter's Cemetery opened.

We serve a limitless God who keeps no real record of time and always makes room for positive historical change.

St. Peter's Cemetery has been visited by many political figures throughout the history of our state. Former Mayor (and now Former Governor) Martin O'Malley. There is also a very large headstone marked with the surname Hogan, if these are former Governor Hogan's ancestors remains to be seen. The cemetery was most recently visited by Maryland State Delegates from Baltimore City and Anne Arundel County in December of 2024. It is clear now is the time for change. Now is the time to correct historical wrongs and now is the time for St. Peter's Cemetery to receive Historic Landmark Designation. Under the current political administration of our country's 3rd elected African American Governor and the First African American Governor in the state of Maryland and his goal of leave no one behind. St. Peter's being a burial ground with multiple ethnic groups makes it ideal for historic landmark designation right now and making the goal of leave no one behind a TRUE reality.

The dedication of this sacred space as a Historic Landmark Designation allows for a bipartisan show of support, and support from multiple ethnic communities throughout the city of Baltimore.

You have received numerous letters of support for historic landmark designation of the cemetery and there are more letters of support on the way.

I look at St. Peter's cemetery and see it as a diamond in the rough. Diamonds are formed in the Earth's mantle, under immense pressure and high temperatures to transform carbon atoms into their unique diamond crystal structure. Just like diamonds with time and many efforts of restoration, vegetation clearance and work to uncover, restore and revive many headstones and grave markers much of which have been hidden under years of neglect St. Peter's cemetery will one day shine like the beautiful sacred treasure it is... in the interim Historic Landmark Designation will give a spiritual covering to the space to help protect it for generations to come.

While every single person that died and is buried at St. Peter's cemetery is important there are a few "notables" whose accomplishments and life achievements have made lasting impacts on history just a few notables and their various accomplishments and ethnic origins are listed below. There are many others but this is a preliminary list.

Some Historic Notables Buried at St. Peter's Cemetery (listed in alphabetical order by ethnic group)

African American

Henry Jakes, who identified as African American and is listed in census records as mulatto, was Baltimore's foremost caterer and event cook in the mid-1800s. Famed for his stewed terrapin and oysters, he shipped Chesapeake delicacies to Chicago and even California. His assistant, Benjamin Franklin Simms, took over the shipping business after Jakes died in 1881, expanding his shipping of terrapins overseas to England. Jakes was the most widely known caterer and event cook in the city at the time of his death. Detailed view of the inscription on the memorial of Henry Jakes (1818-1881) reads: "To My Beloved Husband, Henry Jakes, departed this life 22, June 1881, in the 62 years of his age. May he rest in peace." An inscription for his son, **Frederick Jakes**, is on the other side of the stone.

Henry Jakes at one time also ran a successful barbershop. Like his father and his son, Catering was in their blood. Throughout his career he was heavily in demand for events, both of a public and private nature. Every now and then he was called to Washington DC to cater to Senators, Ministers of faith, Congressmen and other dignitaries. Weddings became his mainstay. Described by Marylanders as the one best equipped to "furnish forth the marriage feast". He also went as far as New York, at the summons of the posh Racket Club where the terrapin and other Maryland luxuries figured as the pride of the feast and of the epicurean host.

Henry Jakes' Wife **Mary Ann Brooks Jakes** is also buried at the family plot. Her obituary reads as follows: Mrs. Mary Ann Jakes, a member of a well-known Maryland family died at her home 110 E. Centre Street, Wednesday of last week. The deceased was born in this city 90 years ago. Though she lost her sight five years ago, she was active in mind until the last. In her girlhood days Mrs. Jakes attended school at the Oblate Sisters of Providence. Mrs. Jakes was the Widow of the late Henry Jakes, the famous Maryland caterer. Mrs. Jakes was deeply interested in religious work and was one of the first members of St. Francis Xavier Church. She is survived by 3 children, 16 grandchildren and 5 great grand-children. The funeral took place at St. Francis Church last Saturday morning, Fathers Dunn, Evers and Plantevigne officiating at a solemn high mass. Interment was in St. Peter's Cemetery.

French

Cora Bujac Together her and her mother after immigrating from France founded the Bujac School of French in Baltimore. Madame Bujac was an accomplished linguist and opened a school in Washington where she taught French, Latin and other languages. Her uncle James Bujc served as a staff officer under Napoleon and her brother James Bujac was a Marquis of France and held a position of much importance in the days of the empire. She was a relative of Mr. Charles Bonaparte of Baltimore, to learn more about him click [here](#)

Dr. Harry Oliver Rue Born in Accomack County Virginia June 25 1882 died in Baltimore May 1, 1955. Harry Oliver Rue was a dental surgeon who lived and worked in Baltimore. He was the son of Revell Ellison Rue, captain of the Schooner Palestine and Anna Marie Heller, a public school teacher.

Harry's father, Ellison Rue, died suddenly when Harry was 1 year old, from an asthma-related incident on September 8, 1883. Harry was raised mostly by his mother and graduated from the University of Baltimore Dental School in 1904. He married Nancy Luthera Combs, daughter of W.A. Combs and Linda A Moore, in 1909. They had two sons, Donald Rue, 1910, and Robb Rue, 1914.

Harry separated from Nancy sometimes in the 1920s, and lived out his life in Baltimore. He died May 1, 1955 at 73 years old of prostate cancer while at Montebello State Hospital in Baltimore.

German

Specifically Bavaria:

George Wunder and family

George arrived in Baltimore in 1837 and would one day marry Mary Ann Grandelmyer of Switzerland at St Peter the Apostle Church on August 12 1847. George was originally by profession a clothes cutter/ tailor after his marriage he and his wife became pioneers in photography in the 1850s it was a very new art form. Together they had at least 11 children.

Specifically Landkresi Verden Lower Saxony

Anton Eckenwalter from Baden, Landkresi Verden Lower Saxony Germany born in 1820 died July 19, 1896 died in his home on 913 West Lombard Street. He was a shoemaker and formerly served in the confederate Army and was present at the surrender of Gen. Robert E. Lee.

Irish

Philip Berrigan

St. Peter Claver Church was founded in 1888 by the Mill Hill Josephite Fathers, and was built specifically for African American parishioners. It is named for Saint Peter Claver, the patron saint of slaves. Philip Berrigan, a Josephite priest, was assigned here as priest prior to his civil disobedience actions in Baltimore and Catonsville in the 1960s.

Philip Berrigan, inspired by the call to action of Vatican II, became an outspoken anti-war and social justice activist. His outspokenness landed him in trouble with his superiors, and in 1965 he was transferred from Newburgh, NY to Baltimore's St. Peter Claver church (which was more removed from the New York anti-war scene, and also closer to the Josephite headquarters). Berrigan was also ordered to avoid controversial topics. He basically gave the finger to his bosses and helped to found the Interfaith Peace Mission (along with fellow Catonsville Nine member Tom Lewis), and began participating in acts of civil disobedience.

Berrigan was buried at St. Peter's Cemetery in 2002. Inside St. Peter Claver, mourners filled every pew – spilling over into the aisles and choir loft for a funeral liturgy marked by calls for social justice and an end to war plans in Iraq. Among Berrigan's greatest admirers was actor Martin Sheen, who traveled from California to attend the funeral. Sheen met Berrigan in 1981 when the actor portrayed a judge involved in a case against the peace activist in the movie "In the King of Prussia."

Sheen called his friend the "gutsiest, most honest, most unbelievable man who took the Gospel seriously and personally." "He's one of the greatest people who ever lived and we thank God for giving him to us," said Sheen in an interview with The Catholic Review. Sheen said his hero was "very influential" in his own return to the Catholic faith, showing him that the Gospel has no meaning unless it is put into action.

Monsignor McColgan, Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Baltimore

Monsignor Edward McColgan, Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Baltimore and for 56 years, the Pastor of St. Peter's Catholic Church, Hollins and Poppleton Street, died Saturday, February 5, 1898, from an attack of cardiac asthma. Edward McColgan was born May 1, 1812, in the town of Cloneha, Parish of Culdaff, county Donegal, Ireland. He came to this country as a youth with his parents, brothers and sisters. After attending St. Mary's College and St. Mary's Seminary, he was ordained a priest in 1839, by Archbishop Eccleston. Following an assignment of three years in a church in Prince George's County, he was invited to be the Pastor of St. Peter's Church in 1842.

St Peter's was then a struggling congregation without a church. The cornerstone of St. Peter's Church was laid on May 22, 1843, in an impressive ceremony with many of the Catholic clergy and 1500 spectators. Robert Cary Long was the architect. St. Peter's eventually prospered to 6,000 members and has contributed to the founding of seven other Catholic parishes.

Cardinal Gibbons appointed Rev. McColgan, the Vicar General of the Archdiocese after the death of Rev. Dr. Joseph Paul Dubreul, Superior of St. Mary's Seminary, in 1873. Pope Leo XIII named him an honorary member of the Pontifical Household, an honor with the title of Monsignor. Rev. McColgan was the founder of St. Mary's Industrial School in 1866 and has been one of its chief trustees. The St. James Home for Boys owes its birth to him. In 1855, he brought the Sisters of Mercy to Maryland and has since been the superior of their order. As a partisan of Irish Home Rule, He became the friend and entertainer of Dillon, Fox, McCarthy and other parliamentary leaders of the cause that visited this country.

He was buried alongside his parents in St. Peter's Cemetery. He is the last of five brothers, all buried in St. Peter's Cemetery, Charles, John, Patrick and James McColgan. His sisters were Miss Catherine and Miss Annie McColgan.

Joseph B Moriarity Sexton (a person who looks after a church and churchyard acting as a bell ringer and formerly as a grave digger) for 25 years is buried at St. Peter's Cemetery.

Katherine "Katie" Degnan McCormick from County Longford Ireland. Her brother James became a very successful miner in Wilburton, Oklahoma.

Italian

Mrs. Catherine B Gaspari notable singer known as "The Nightingale" of Baltimore died at Mercy Hospital

Cemetery Records

Additionally, contrary to what some oral history's have said, the original records of the cemetery exist. The former nuns and those that followed at Jonah House, resided in the main house on the property grounds kept the records safe for years where the church had abandoned them. I was blessed to be able to obtain the records, saving them from any potential flood damage and returned them to St. Mary's Seminary Archives for safe and proper archival storage. While the original records for the cemetery will be great for some families the records will still leave mysteries unsolved for others. This is where church records and death certificates and family histories will play a large part in uncovering the details of the lives of those buried at St. Peter's Cemetery. My mother, Sandra Johnson has been diligently pulling the death certificates for the cemetery, she goes to Baltimore city archives weekly and pulls approximately 3 days a week for about 5 hours a day. Although not as frequent as my mother, I too have been actively pulling and organizing these death certificates. These efforts reveal all those buried at the cemetery from 1874 to 1969 when interments officially stopped. While records are missing from 1851- 1874

because Baltimore was not tracking this information at the time, church records, family records and oral histories reveal some of this missing information.

Historic Landmark Designation

The cemetery has been in existence for 174 years and this is the time to save this history and preserve it for future generations of African Americans, French, German, Irish, Italian and many other ethnic immigrants that are buried at St. Peter's Cemetery and allow their stories to reign and be a strong reminder that no matter how dark a past the future is bright and always continue to dream if our ancestors can come through Slavery, Famine, Wars and all other kinds of hardships and make good lives for themselves and future generations so can we today overcome and thrive in spite of it all.

I truly hope you will take the time to read every letter you receive for Historic Landmark Designation of St. Peter's Cemetery and hear the cries that have existed for generations and break the generational curse that has held people and buried souls in bondage, neglect and oppression that has plagued St. Peter's cemetery for far too long. Please help as church folks say "loose the shackles" that have kept generations bound and set the captives free and help restore St. Peter's Cemetery to a place of dignity, honor and serenity in perpetuity for all souls buried in the hallowed grounds.

Thanks in advance for your time and consideration and for your help making Historic Landmark Designation a reality for St. Peter's Cemetery.

Sincerely,

Ms. Jennifer Johnson

Founder Friends of St. Peter's Cemetery

410-241-4331

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¹ Information contained in this letter comes from the may sources listed below

<https://www.jonahhouse.org/archive/O%27Malleyvisits.htm>

<https://www.mdhistory.org/resources/henry-jakes-memorial/>

<https://www.mdhistory.org/resources/jakes-family-memorial/>

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/168724889/henry-jakes>

<https://legacyquiltproject.mofad.org/quilt/henry-jakes/>

<https://www.thebaltimorebanner.com/culture/food-drink/black-marylanders-food-history-VTSAREP34ZC7E PD23IOCHGPMCY/>

All other death information found via this link

<https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/81593/saint-peter-s-cemetery>

<https://catholicreview.org/philip-berrigan-praised-as-prophet-of-peace-at-baltimore-funeral-mass/>

<https://theclio.com/entry/118228>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philip_Berrigan

<https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=136419>

John T. Bullock

Councilman District 9

100 Holliday Street

Room 503

Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Dear Councilman Bullock,

I am writing to express my full support for the designation of Saint Peter the Apostle Cemetery as a historic site. This cemetery holds exceptional cultural, and historical, significance, making it a vital part of our community's heritage.

As a resting place for generations of individuals who contributed to the rich history of Baltimore, Saint Peter the Apostle Cemetery stands as a monument to the past, offering invaluable insights into the lives and stories of our ancestors and highlight the cemetery's importance as a tangible link to our shared history.

Designating the cemetery as a historic site will ensure its preservation for future generations, allowing the community and visitors to appreciate its significance and learn from the history it represents. It will also provide opportunities for education, cultural enrichment, and heritage tourism, further underscoring its value to our area and beyond.

I urge you to support this designation and take the necessary steps to protect and celebrate the legacy of Saint Peter the Apostle Cemetery. Thank you for considering this important initiative.

Sincerely,

Greg Burton

Baltimore County Genealogical Society

P.O. Box 19985

Towson, Maryland 21285



April 18, 2025

The Honorable John T. Bullock
Councilman, District 9
100 Holliday Street Room 503
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Dear Councilman Bullock,

This letter expresses the strong support of the Irish Railroad Workers Museum for the efforts to designate St. Peter's Cemetery as a historic landmark in Baltimore.

As Director of the Irish Railroad Workers Museum (www.irishshrine.org), I oversee an institution dedicated to preserving and interpreting the history of Irish immigrants who arrived in Baltimore, particularly during and after the Great Hunger. Our museum guides visitors through the restored home and explores the lives of James and Sarah Feeley, Irish immigrants who resided on Lemmon Street.

The homes on Lemmon Street, built in 1848, were intentionally constructed to provide housing for immigrant families, placing them in close proximity to their workplaces, the Hollins Market shopping district, and vital community anchors such as St. Peter the Apostle Catholic Church, located just two blocks away, and its associated schools. Many of these Irish immigrants found employment at the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad's Mount Clare Shops. Our museum's mission is to educate the public about the rich tapestry of life for these Irish immigrants in West Baltimore – where they lived, worked, shopped, and worshiped.

St. Peter's Cemetery is an integral element of this narrative. It serves as the final resting place for numerous Irish immigrants who, facing immense hardship, came to Baltimore to build new lives. These individuals made significant contributions to the development of the nation's railroads and established a thriving community in West Baltimore, centered around St. Peter the Apostle Catholic Church and its educational institutions. Furthermore, the cemetery is an important site for our museum's programming. We utilize the grounds for events such as our annual Irish Wake in the fall, which helps to further educate the public about Irish traditions and the lives of those interred there.

Crucially, St. Peter's Cemetery is the burial site of James and Sarah Feeley, the very individuals whose lives and home we interpret at the Irish Railroad Workers Museum. Their restored 1840s Lemmon Street residence provides our visitors with invaluable insights into domestic life during that era.

Therefore, the Irish Railroad Workers Museum wholeheartedly supports the designation of St. Peter's Cemetery as a historic landmark. We recognize its profound historical significance to the Irish community we represent and will continue to advocate for its preservation and restoration. We are also aware of and commend the growing coalition of community members dedicated to this important endeavor.

Sincerely yours,

Sammie Samuels
Director, Irish Railroad Workers Museum
918-920 Lemmon Street
Baltimore, MD 21223

JOHNS HOPKINS
UNIVERSITY

THE SHERIDAN LIBRARIES

Special Collections and Archives
The Milton S. Eisenhower Library
3400 North Charles Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21218-2683

May 25, 2025

Dear Councilman John T. Bullock, Ph.D.,

I am writing in support of the application of St. Peter's Cemetery in West Baltimore for Historic Landmark Designation.

I am a curator for the Sheridan Libraries, Johns Hopkins University, where I also teach in the Museums & Society program. I teach a course about Black burial grounds in the United States, with a special focus on Mount Auburn Cemetery in Baltimore and other local cemeteries. Ms. Jennifer Johnson, Founder of Friends of St. Peter's Cemetery, was kind enough to give a tour of St. Peter's to our class this semester and, in a word, I was blown away by the historic significance of this site. Ms. Johnson's work to preserve the cemetery as a whole, and specifically its historic African American section, is nothing short of heroic. Not only does the site offer an opportunity to enrich the historic record about people buried there, but it documents the interesting and painful history of segregation in the Catholic Church. Most white churches did not accept Black interments at all; the local diocese must have decided to allow St. Peter's Cemetery to do so while maintaining racial segregation in the division of cemetery space. The cemetery was connected to both an Irish church, St. Peter the Apostle, and an historic African American congregation, the storied St. Peter Claver. Given this background, St. Peter's is not only a private space for mourning, but also a space with a distinctive and important role in local history. It is incumbent upon us to preserve and protect this cemetery from potential incursions so that future generations can continue to honor their ancestors buried there and learn from its history.

Thank you for your time and your efforts on behalf of your district.

All best,

Gabrielle N O Dean

Gabrielle Dean, Ph.D.
William Kurrelmeyer Curator of Rare Books & Manuscripts
Adjunct Professor
Johns Hopkins University

Telephone 410-516-8348 ♦ <https://www.library.jhu.edu/library-departments/special-collections/>

4/28/25

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of establishing a Historical Landmark designation for St. Peter's Cemetery off Bentalou St in Baltimore.

Located in West Baltimore, St. Peter's Cemetery was used as a burial place from 1851-1969. The cemetery started as an Irish parish cemetery, linked to St. Peter the Apostle, and ultimately served the predominantly African American congregation of St. Peter Claver. An estimated 15,000 graves are spread across the 22 or 23 acres of land, surrounded by industrial scrap yards, housing developments, a National Guard armory, and small townhouses on Bentalou St.

When I first visited the cemetery around 1994, it was overgrown and many gravestones had fallen over. I was 14 in 1996 when my family began living in the cemetery full time as part of the Jonah House community. Jonah House's work, long focused on anti-nuclear activism, took on a new arm: stewardship and beautification of this long-neglected green space. Mowing, righting headstones, cataloging and mapping graves, clearing brush and planting gardens and trees became the everyday work. By 2016, most of the original community members had aged out of heavy manual labor and many had moved away. The cemetery now needs a new plan for its maintenance.

This cemetery is a final resting place for many people who shaped West Baltimore and the larger region. Predominantly Irish, the cemetery includes graves of many other European Immigrants and has a historic African American section.

This history should be preserved. The cemetery should be permanently protected with a maintenance fund and a long-term vision, guided by stakeholders including family members of those buried, neighbors and parishioners of St. Peter the Apostle and St. Peter Claver.

Though I no longer live in Baltimore, I have been deeply enriched by time at St. Peter's Cemetery. I support keeping this beautiful place a haven for anyone who seeks to visit the departed, learn about the history, or meditate in the quiet open space.

In peace,

Kate Berrigan

kateberrigan@gmail.com



Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture

84 Franklin Street, Annapolis, MD 21401 410-216-6180

www.africanamerican.maryland.gov

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John T. Bullock - District 9
100 Holliday Street
Room 503
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Dear Councilman Bullock,

The Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture is committed to discovering, documenting, preserving, collecting, and promoting Maryland's African American heritage. The Commission also provides technical assistance to institutions and groups with similar objectives. Through the accomplishment of this mission, we educate Maryland citizens and visitors to our state about the significance of the African American experience in Maryland. As we all know a church is not just a building but rather those people who attend the church create its soul and legacy. St. Peter Claver, which was and is primarily African American in the makeup of the congregation along with St. Peter the Apostle which was primarily Irish in the makeup of its congregation are both Historic Landmark Designations. From its opening in 1851 to 1969, the people who attended these churches were primarily buried at St Peter's Cemetery located at 1301 Moreland Ave Baltimore MD 21216, (with a few special burials happening in the 2000s). It is important to West Baltimore that those families, particularly the African Americans who worked, lived and created lasting memories, and legacies in West Baltimore be honored and their history be preserved. As the cemetery approaches its 175th Anniversary we think it is very fitting that it now receive the Historic Landmark Designation and that the burial grounds be restored to a place of dignity and honor. This designation is long overdue.

Thank you in advance for making this Historic Landmark Designation a reality for St. Peter's Cemetery, bringing positive change to District 9 in Baltimore City, and preserving the histories of everyone buried at St. Peter's Cemetery, especially African Americans.

9811 Tolworth Circle
Randallstown, Maryland 21133
June 3, 2025

Councilman John T. Bullock – District 9
100 Holiday Street
Room 503
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Greetings Councilman Bullock,

I am a Volunteer Research Coordinator for the Mount Auburn Cemetery, located in the south Baltimore community of Westport. Our cemetery was founded in 1872 and shares a similar age and prominence with the historic St. Peter's Cemetery in your district.

I support the efforts to place a well earned recognition for Historic Landmark Designation for St. Peter's. Both cemeteries continue to survive and deserve continued recognition for the service to the Baltimore community for almost two centuries.

Please add my name and support to this effort.

Thank you



Jesse J Bennett, Jr.

443 286-5355

The St. Peters Cemetery holds great value to the community and provides a space for families to gather, even at a cemetery.

When we look at the history of African Americans and those underserve populations, representation and remembrance is very importance to keep the integrity of culture and tradition. Many times, those who have passed are celebrated during holidays, birthdays, drives around the location where they were born or lived in order to maintain the spirt of their lives.

Cemeteries serve a host site for some to gather, reminisce, and revel in love. Without the upkeep and preservation of St. Peters Cemetery, many families may lose a sense of bond, brotherhood/sisterhood, and family that this site holds. For my family, the written documentation of family's members being buried in a site and having unmarked graves strikes a chord for change. Please be a change agent, preserving this great treasure.

Nicole Freeman

4109639373


Omega Baltimore Foundation, Inc.
1530 N. Bentalou Street
Baltimore, MD 21217

June 2, 2025

Dear Councilman John Bullock

My name is Zanes Cypress, President of the Omega Baltimore Foundation., which operates the Eastwood Recreation Center, we are pleased to provide our strong support for the Historic Landmark Designation of St. Peter's Cemetery, located at 1301 Moreland Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland.

St. Peter's Cemetery, now 174 years old, represents a significant piece of Baltimore's rich cultural and religious heritage that deserves formal recognition and protection. This sacred ground has served as the final resting place for generations of Baltimore residents, including members of diverse communities that have shaped our city's character and history.

The cemetery's historical significance is further underscored by its connection to two already designated Historic Landmark churches: St. Peter the Apostle, which primarily served the Irish community, and St. Peter Claver, which primarily served the African American community. The designation of both feeder churches as Historic Landmarks makes the oversight of the cemetery's designation particularly notable and something that should be corrected.

The Omega Baltimore Foundation recognizes that historic preservation strengthens our community by maintaining connections to our past while building foundations for our future. St. Peter's Cemetery embodies the multicultural heritage of Baltimore and represents the shared history of communities that, while distinct in their origins and traditions, came together in this final resting place.

We believe that granting Historic Landmark Designation to St. Peter's Cemetery is not only appropriate but long overdue. This designation would bring deserved honor to the cemetery and all those interred within its bounds, while ensuring that this important piece of Baltimore's history receives the recognition and protection it merits.

The Omega Baltimore Foundation, Inc. respectfully urges the Historic Preservation Review Board to approve the Historic Landmark Designation for St. Peter's Cemetery.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,
Zanes Cypress
President, Omega Baltimore Foundation, Inc.
Operating Eastwood Recreation Center
zcypress@omegabaltimore.org

John T. Bullock, PhD
District 9
100 Holliday Street
Room 503 Baltimore, MD 21202

4427 Harcourt Road
Baltimore, MD 21214

April 26, 2025

Re: Request for Historic Landmark Designation for
St. Peter's Cemetery

Dear Councilman Bullock:

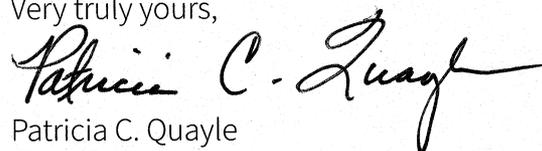
No doubt you are familiar with my late husband, Vincent P. Quayle, as well as with St. Ambrose Housing Aid Center ("SAHAC"), the non-profit housing organization that he founded in the late 1960s. The mission of SAHAC continues to serve the residents of the City of Baltimore with vibrancy and dedication. Vinnie was committed to this mission throughout his 50+ years at the helm and passed the SAHAC torch to dedicated leadership and staff when his health began to decline.

I am writing to you in your capacity as Councilman of District 9 to explain that Vinnie also devoted time and service to another cause housed in your District, namely, the restoration of St. Peter's Cemetery. His service to the Cemetery board endured for 20 plus years. As you no doubt know, the Cemetery contains the gravesites of Baltimore City residents affiliated with the parishes of both St. Peter the Apostle (primarily of Irish heritage in its congregation) and St. Peter Claver (primarily of African American heritage in its congregation).

It is my understanding that since Vinnie's death in March, 2023 there has grown a robust and dedicated effort to continue the restoration of the Cemetery so that the descendants of families from both feeder parishes may honor and grieve their loved ones. Pivotal to achieving this needed task as to obtain Historic Landmark Designation for St. Peter's Cemetery. Such designation would mean so much to so many who cherish their forbears, many of whom remain hidden and neglected.

In light of Vinnie's personal efforts and lifelong concerns for families in the City, I make this request of you and thank you in advance for your assistance to obtain Historic Landmark Designation for St. Peter's Cemetery. I believe he would strongly support this endeavor.

Very truly yours,



Patricia C. Quayle
443-955-8852

Robert Young III
4203 W. Dale Ave.
Tampa, FL 33609

April 18, 2025

RE: St. Peter's Cemetery

To whom it may concern,

This cemetery is of great importance to me because I have many family members buried there. My Gavin immigrant ancestors John and Bridget , who escaped the Irish potato famine in County Mayo, Ireland to start a new life in Baltimore are buried here. My Canton immigrant ancestors, John and Mary Burke Canton are buried here. They were married in Cloonduane, County Mayo, Ireland. They too escaped the famine with three children in tow and risked an oversea journey to start anew here.

Children from the next generation including John J. Canton, Jr., Walter Matthews Gavin and Martin Joseph Canton are buried here. My 90 year old mother's sister Lura Marie Gavin is buried at St. Peter's Cemetery.

A cemetery should be kept presentable with well maintained grounds that are kept mowed and free from overgrowth. All information regarding the interred should be well documented and readily available to the public. A cemetery should be forever be protected from developers looking to profit from this sacred ground.

Please grant historic landmark designation to help preserve St. Peter's Cemetery in perpetuity.

Sincerely
Robert Young , III



ROSE HILL CEMETERY

Honoring the Past While Embracing the Future

April 18, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is written from two perspectives as to the importance of establishing a Historic Landmark Designation for St. Peter's Cemetery.

Firstly – the earliest Raffertys (my family) attended St. Peter's Catholic Church in the 1850's and 1860's. The burials of my great, great, great grandparents remain a mystery. I would hate to see this cemetery fall by the wayside and ultimately disappear on the off chance my family members are actually buried there.

Secondly – as a Cemeterian, I think it is appalling that our communities don't take care of all cemeteries – that cemetery owners are not held accountable and local leadership doesn't assume ownership (or allow others to assume the responsibility) when the cemeteries are abandoned.

I request that St. Peter's Cemetery receive the designation as a Historic Landmark to preserve its rich history for the Baltimore community and for the descendants of those laid to rest there.

I appreciate your consideration.

Kindest Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Colleen R. Rafferty". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Colleen Rafferty
Executive Director

First off I am Thankful for Jennifer Johnson's leadership and commitment to St Peter's Cemetery. As her mother, I have told her about our ancestors on many occasions. I can't say enough about them as I am very proud of all of them.

My great grandmother, Susan Simms was born a slave, we were very proud and hard working people. Most of us were members of St. Peters Claver's Church and lived in the area near St. Peter's Cemetery and St. Peter's Church for many years. My relatives, who I know of who are buried in the Cemetery include my Mother (Elsie

Green), Grandmother, Great Grandmother, two Uncles, and at least two Cousins. My mother, who died in 1960 when I was 13 years old was buried with her brother Edward. As I recall at that time the cemetery was quite well maintained. Several years later, I was informed that the cemetery was being moved and all bodies were being moved to Woodlawn Cemetery at St. Peter's expense. Subsequently I learned that the move was cancelled. On a later visit, I talked to a Nun, who was living on site and using goats and llamas to keep the grass maintained. On a more recent visit, we couldn't

believe our eyes, the cemetery looked like a forest. My daughter, Jennifer Johnson's efforts have greatly improved the appearance and final resting place for our relatives and thousands of others.

I believe that Historic Landmark Designation will ensure that the Cemetery will be properly maintained and a proper resting place for the thousands, who are buried there including our relatives.

Sandra A. Johnson

Sheila R. Wiggins
1316 N. Bentalou Street
Baltimore, MD 21216
Email: pnnfriend1@gmail.com

28 April 2025

Council Member John T. Bullock
Baltimore City Council
100 Holliday Street
Room 503
Baltimore, MD 21202

Subject: Letter of Support for Nomination of St. Peter's Cemetery as a Baltimore City Historic Landmark

Dear Council Member Bullock,

I am writing to express my strong support for the nomination of St. Peter's Cemetery, located at 1300 Moreland Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21216, for designation as a Baltimore City Historic Landmark.

St. Peter's Cemetery has been at its present site for over 170 years. It was established in 1851 in what was then the 3rd District of Baltimore County. In 1888, it became part of Baltimore City when the portion of Baltimore County between Fulton Street and the Gwynns Falls was annexed to Baltimore City.

Currently, St. Peter's Cemetery is surrounded by areas and associated with buildings that have historical significance. It is bounded on the south (Winchester Street) and east (North Bentalou Street) by the Edmondson Ave Historic District (National Registry B-5187). To the north are the tracks of the historically significant Western Maryland Railway. Immediately to the west is the Melvin Cade Armory (formerly, the Winchester Street Armory) which is a Baltimore City Historic Landmark. The feeder Catholic churches, St. Peter the Apostle and St. Peter Claver, are Baltimore City Historic Landmarks.

Another historical note for St. Peter's Cemetery. Among the thousands of persons buried in its grounds is Philip Berrigan, who along with his brother Daniel, was a nationally known peace activist and anti-Vietnam War protester.

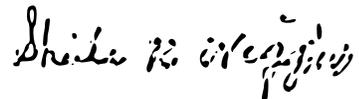
My parents purchased the house on North Bentalou Street in 1952; so, the northern portion of St. Peter's Cemetery has been a neighbor for more than 70 years. As a child, I can remember watching the trees bud in the Spring and the leaves change colors in the Fall. Over the years, the various caretakers have befriended the residents in the block. The cemetery has been a quiet, bucolic oasis in this area of Baltimore City.

Unfortunately, the southern portion of St. Peter's Cemetery, between Winchester Street and the Laurens Street extension, was sold to Baltimore City in the 1960s and apartment complexes were built on the property. The sale and subsequent development changed the demographics and the environmental and social dynamics of the area.

Making the remaining northern portion of St. Peter's Cemetery a Historic Landmark would preserve it as a final resting place and afford protection against unwanted urban development.

As a neighbor of St. Peter's Cemetery, I applaud the efforts of Ms. Jennifer Johnson, Founder of the Friends of St. Peter's Cemetery, to restore and preserve the cemetery. I strongly support her efforts to advocate for Historic Landmark Designation for St. Peter's Cemetery.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sheila R. Wiggins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial 'S'.

Sheila R. Wiggins

The Importance of St. Peter's Cemetery:

My German ancestors left warworn Germany in the 1860's as children, coming to Baltimore with their parents hoping for a new life and peace.

My great-grandmother, Sophia Heil, arrived in Baltimore at the age of two with an older sister, a twin sister, and an older brother. Sadly, her twin and brother did not survive. More children would be born in Baltimore and again, not all survived. Her father became a tailor and her mother eventually opened a small confectionary store. Life for this immigrant family would be a struggle in Westport.

My great-grandfather, Rudolph Reuling, arrived in Baltimore at the age of seven with several siblings and his widowed mother. Rudolph would become a blacksmith and a carriage maker. Rudolph and Sophia married in 1884 in Baltimore and lost their first child at two days old. They would go on to have seven more children. Rudolph died in 1908 after an agonizing battle with colon cancer on Lemmon St. just blocks for St. Peter's church. Somehow, Sophia managed to buy a large family plot (two plots actually) in St. Peter's Cemetery. A large obelisk was eventually erected on the plot. In 1909, Rudolph and Sophia's youngest child (age 5) would be buried in the plot with her father. Over the years at least 10 family members would be buried there including three more children and Sophia's older sister, brother-in-law and nephew. In all, three generations are buried there. This plot was so important to the family that both Sophia (1920) and her sister (1932) were transferred from New Jersey after their deaths to be buried in the family plot.

In my youth, my grandfather often visited this plot and as part of the 1980's clean-up, my father and I often volunteered on Sundays to clear graves and paths in the cemetery. In the last ten years, my fraternal group has also helped to clean the cemetery. I was raised to remember those who strived to make my existence possible and maybe even better than the generation before. **These graves need to be revered and preserved** as they represent the everyday person in Baltimore and is a place where German, Irish, Italian, French, and African can all be laid to rest for what they thought would be forever. It was supposed to be the peace my great-grandparents sought in coming to Baltimore.

Timothy Harvey

Tgharvey2@aol.com



THE NEW UNION BAPTIST CHURCH, INCORPORATED OF BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

"The Church Where Everybody Is Somebody and Christ Is All"

500-510 N. Monroe Street | Baltimore, MD 21223

Office: 410.945.6019 Fax 410.325.7767 (c)

Email: newunionbaptchbc@gmail.com

Organized Feb. 7, 1904

Rev. Dr. Hari P. Close, II
Senior Pastor

443.506.6876

May 11, 2025

The Honorable John T. Bullock
Councilman of District 9
Baltimore City Council
100 Holliday Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

Dear Councilman Bullock:

It is with much honor, I write this letter in support of Miss Jennifer Johnson, Founder, of Friends of St. Peter's Cemetery. We must make St. Peter's Cemetery a Historic Landmark Designation! Miss Johnson work has been featured on multiple news stations and newspapers. I had the pleasure to join her in one of the news featured filmed at St. James Episcopal Church in West Baltimore. As a past Intenational President of the National Funeral Directors and Morticians Association, Incorporated, we must honor our forefathers and foremothers with dignity, honor and respect.

This cemetery is full of people who labored in West Baltimore from 1851. They are all someone's loved one and the history of their lives deserves to be part of the revitalization and restoration efforts taking place throughout West Baltimore. We must preserve their Legacy!

Once again, St. Peter's Cemetery a Historic Landmark Designation is long overdue. This designation will be one step in the right direction. We need to bring healing to the generations of brokenhearted descendants that have loved ones buried in this sacred and hollow ground.

Thank you, Councilman Bullock for making history and doing the right thing in the 174th year of the cemetery's existence. Let's not delay this any longer as tomorrow is never promised. All of us should honor God in our giving to Mankind.

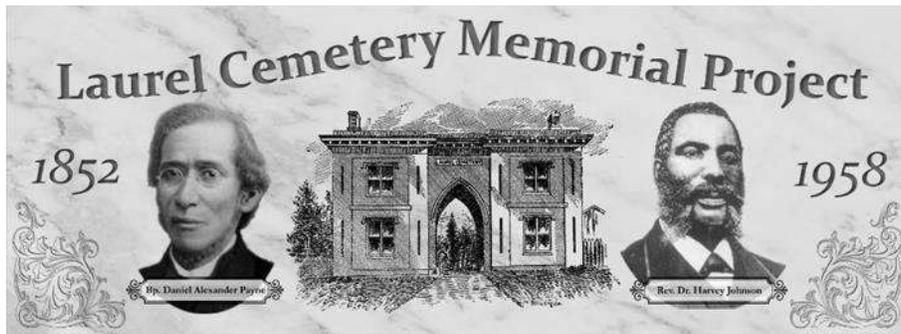
Many blessings for your service to the Citizens of Baltimore.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. P. Close, II'.

Dr. Hari P. Close, II, CFSP, COCP, CFSGM
Senior Pastor

Cc: Miss Jennifer Johnson



John T. Bullock - District 9
100 Holliday Street
Room 503
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

May 30, 2025

Dear Councilman Bullock,

Please accept this letter of support for Baltimore's St. Peter's Cemetery to receive Historic Landmark designation. As an anthropologist, my current work centers on the preservation and memorialization of black cemeteries. These efforts have led me to create the Laurel Cemetery Memorial Project—a 501(c)(3) organization with the goal of researching and teaching about Baltimore's historic Laurel Cemetery (www.laurelcemetery.omeka.net). Overall, this work has led me to a deeper understanding of the critical need to protect and preserve burial grounds within the African American community and beyond.

Through my work, I was privileged to become acquainted with Ms. Jennifer Johnson and to learn about her efforts to preserve the St. Peter's Cemetery in West Baltimore. The restoration and proper maintenance of this site can be a treasure for future generations of descendants, local historians, and genealogists alike. I am supportive of Ms. Johnson's work, and I feel that she should be commended for her tireless efforts toward the preservation of this sacred site in our community. I am available if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Elgin L. Klugh, PhD
President
Laurel Cemetery Memorial Project, Inc.
4638 Chatsworth Way
Ellicott City, MD 21043
lcmpbaltimore@gmail.com
443-472-7080