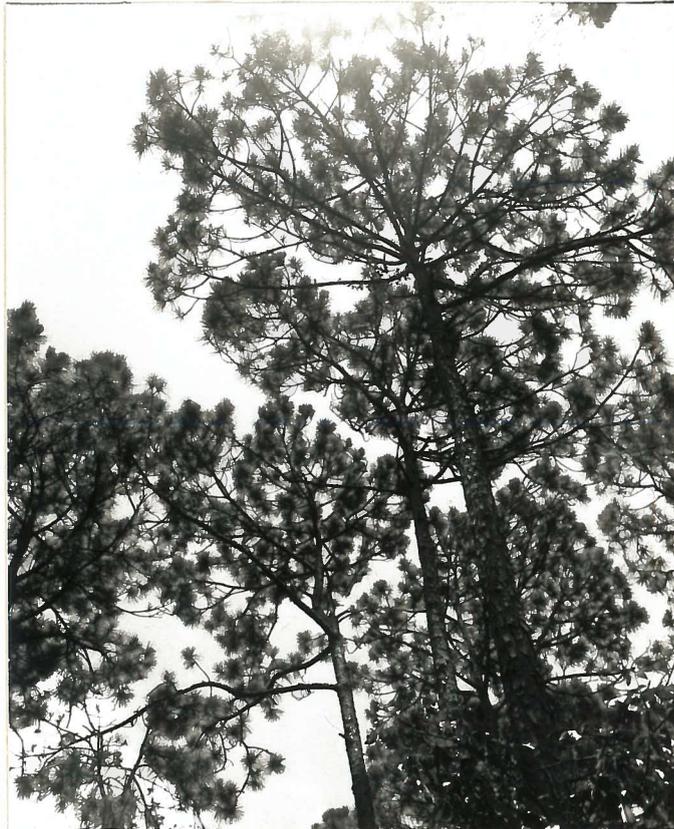


REPORT OF THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION DIVISION  
TO THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD  
ON THE DESIGNATION OF  
PINWOOD CEMETERY  
SUNSET AND ERWIN ROADS  
AS AN HISTORIC LANDMARK SITE



(PREPARED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 16B-17,2(B)  
OF THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES ORDINANCE 2508)

PREPARED BY *Ellen J. Uguccioni* 7-17-86  
ELLEN J. UGUCCIONI DATE  
HISTORIC LANDMARK OFFICER

HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD ACTION \_\_\_\_\_

RECOMMEND APPROVAL \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: July 17, 1986

# THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES

OFFICE OF  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION DIVISION  
PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
CITY HALL



THE CITY BEAUTIFUL

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LHD 86-04

## LOCAL HISTORIC DESIGNATION OF:

### PINEWOOD CEMETERY SUNSET AND ERWIN ROAD, CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA

**Applicant:** Historic Landmark Officer in cooperation with the Pinewood Cemetery Advisory Board, per instruction of the Coral Gables City Commission (Resolution No. 25601) dated April 8, 1986

**Legal Description:** The west 210' of the south 840' of the north 1050' of the n/w 1/4 of Section 32, Township 54 south, Range 41 east, Dade County, Florida (area encompasses approximately four acres).

**Present Zoning:** "R-7"

**Other Common and/or Historic Names:** Cocoplum Cemetery; Pine Wood Cemetery.

## SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Pinewood Cemetery has a long and distinguished history pre-dating the incorporation of the City of Coral Gables. Evidence indicates that its use as a cemetery began in the middle of the nineteenth century. Many important settlers in the Coconut Grove and Larkins (now South Miami) communities were buried there. During the course of later events, heroes from the Spanish American and Civil Wars were interred there, as well as citizens who made a substantial impact on the development of our local communities.

Pinewood was officially platted with a formal landscape element consisting of a center oval with surrounding plots and pathways. Evidence indicates that it was, and continues to be a model to illustrate indigenous plant, and other forms of vegetation.

Pinewood Cemetery is a substantive reminder of our early pioneer heritage, and conveys a natural tropical habitat that exists as an oasis in the center of the highly developed cities of Coral Gables, and surrounding metropolises.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF PINEWOOD CEMETERY

In the mid 1900's the area in which Pinewood Cemetery is located existed as part of a vast frontier. Settlers located along the bay-front reef from "Little Hunting Ground", (later known as Coconut Grove) to "Big Hunting Ground" (presently known as Cutler).

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Pinewood Cemetery  
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Later settlers moved west to the area known as South Miami. Wilson A. Larkins established a post office there and the town became known as "Larkins".

Evidence indicates that the use of the acreage now known as Pinewood Cemetery (named for the majestic pines which dominate its landscape) dated from the middle to late 19th century. As early homesteaders established themselves in the area, they developed social institutions which included schools, churches, and of necessity, graveyards.

Pinewood, existed as non-arable land, suitable for use as a cemetery. Burials in the cemetery included early settlers, as well as heroes of the Spanish-American War, and the Civil War.

In 1911 the official plat of the Cemetery was filed, illustrating a formally planned cemetery which was divided into uniform plots surrounding a central oval, with a pathway circumscribing the oval.

Burials continued throughout this period of development with a number of grave markers, of various sizes and types placed by the families of the deceased.

Today the cemetery does not convey the formality of the 1911 plan, but rather features natural vegetation which covers the site. The cemetery portrays its "rural" nature, reflecting its 19th century origins.

#### PINEWOOD CEMETERY CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

- 1895 Title to Section 32, Township 54 given to Adam Richards, originally from Canton, Ohio an early homesteader.
- 1896 City of Miami, incorporated.
- 1897 One acre deeded to the TRUSTEES OF THE PINEWOOD CEMETERY ASSOCIATION (comprised of Wilson Larkins, Arthur Lang and Arthur Kingsley).
- 1898 Wilson Larkins establishes a Post Office at what is now the corner of Sunset and Ingraham Roads, South Miami. In 1898 Larkins Florida was the name of the town in which Pinewood Cemetery is located.
- 1900 Deed conveying land from Adam Richards to Harley Standt, for the purpose of constructing a "School House and Graveyard."
- 1906 Additional three acres deeded to the Pinewood Cemetery Trustees.

**CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS (Continued)**

- 1911 Plat of the four acre cemetery is filed---Plan shows the acreage divided into two hundred and sixty one lots, surrounding a central oval.
- 1924 George Merrick conveys an easement to South Atlantic Telephone and Telegraph to "construct, maintain and operate... telephone and telegraph poles, wires,...etc." adjacent to the Pinewood property.

**LATER EVENTS:**

(Note for historic designation the period of significance extends from 1897, (the documented date for the establishment of the cemetery) thru 1936...it is that significance which will become the basis for a judgement as to whether or not the cemetery possesses sufficient merit to become a locally designated Historic Site...)

Later events are described for the purpose of developing the argument for the integrity of the cemetery which has suffered a loss of markers and vandalism. Further, through the rapid encroachment of vegetation which obscured markers, and caused some physical damage, the cemetery was partially bulldozed in an effort to control some of that vegetation...)

- 1963 City of Coral Gables appropriates funds to clear the grounds. Bulldozing and hand cutting of the vegetation occurs. Project assisted by the Boy Scouts, and the United Daughters of the Confederacy, Southern Cross Chapter.
- 1963 Pinewood Cemetery Advisory Committee established by the City of Coral Gables.
- 1968 City Commission votes to turn Pinewood land over to Metro Dade County. Metro Dade declines to accept.
- 1984 City Commission establishes seven member Advisory Board.

**EXISTING PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS**

**Topography:**

Pinewood Cemetery encompasses some four acres of ground, which is carpeted by natural growth, and from the needles of the majestic pines which tower above it. The substrata is a coral rock. Depressions in the ground give evidence of former burials.

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#### EXISTING PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS (Continued)

##### Monuments/Definition of Plots

Though vandalism and bulldozing have taken a toll on the markers placed in the cemetery, there are still a variety of memorials that exist. Some perimeter walls of plots have been identified by the use of coral rock, and some by concrete curbing.

##### Natural Growth

Pinewood Cemetery is a rare survivor which gives evidence of the natural growth which would have existed in the area before development began. Indegenous plants there include the coonti (a plant which early settlers used as a cash crop), palmetto, and an infinite variety of wild flowers, vines and other types of vegetation. Pinewood features a number of different types of trees which include: Schefflera, Florida Elm, Poinciana, Gumbo Limbo, Palm, Pigeon Plum, Cypress and Pines.

#### PINEWOOD CEMETERY/PERSONS INTERRED

The following represents a partial listing of persons known to be buried in Pinewood Cemetery, who figured prominently in history. Approximately one hundred persons have thus far been identified by name.

John Addison, early pioneer who settled in the Cutler area, after the Civil War. Mr. Addison and his wife Mary made their living by farming the land. The Addisons were only two of approximately one hundred other whites who settled in this area on the shore of Biscayne Bay in the 1860's.

Jeromiah T. Barnett, d. 1925

Spanish American War Veteran, and a carpenter by trade. Four generations of the family are buried in Pinewood. The Barnetts made their home in Coconut Grove.

George T. Crews, d. 1899

George Crews is the first recorded burial in Pinewood.

Agnes McGuffy Crockett, d. 1909

Mrs. Crockett was the cousin of Kirk Munroe, well known author. Mrs. Crockett was a resident of Coconut Grove.

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**PINEWOOD CEMETERY/PERSONS INTERRED (Continued)**

William L. Laesch, d. 1904

Born in Germany, Laesch came to Miami in 1899. Laesch purchased the Rogers homestead located northwest of the present Sunset Elementary School on Sunset Drive in Coral Gables. Laesch originally a school master, began manufacturing guava jelly. That business, subsequently operated by his heirs became internationally known, and in 1947 the firm won two Miami Chamber of Commerce awards as the oldest industry in the area still operated by the original founder.

Arthur Lang, d. 1930

Lang was an original trustee of Pinewood Cemetery. He came to Miami in 1893 from Glasgow, Scotland and operated a lumber business.

George W. Perry, d. 1914

Perry a Confederate Veteran of the Civil War came to Florida in 1893. Because of his war wounds Perry was pensioned and lived in Coconut Grove for the remainder of his life.

George L. Roberts, d. 1921

There are four generations of this family buried in Pinewood. Roberts made his home in Coconut Grove and was in the wholesale fish business.

Richard F. Steele, d. 1920

Steele was a managing editor of the St. Paul Daily News in Minnesota (1889-1895) before coming to Florida. (Mr. Steele's marker was inscribed with the words "journalist, humorist, atheist.") His wife Carrie was one of the first newspaperwomen to work in the northwest.

Thomas H. Thorpe, d. 1927

Originally from Detroit, Thorpe came to Miami in 1871 with William Brickell and helped build the Brickell compound.

**STAFF CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

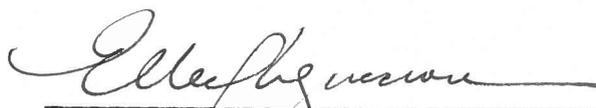
The staff finds that Pinewood Cemetery has an importance related to the community, region, and state. While its direct associations with the City of Coral Gables are of a lesser degree, the staff finds that designation is not contrary to the stated purpose of the Historic Preservation Ordinance:

"The purpose of this article is to promote the educational, cultural, and economic welfare of the public by preserving and protecting historic structures or sites, portions of structures, groups of structures, manmade or natural landscape elements, works of art, or integrated combinations thereof, which serve as visible reminders of the history and cultural heritage of the city, state or nation." (emphasis added).

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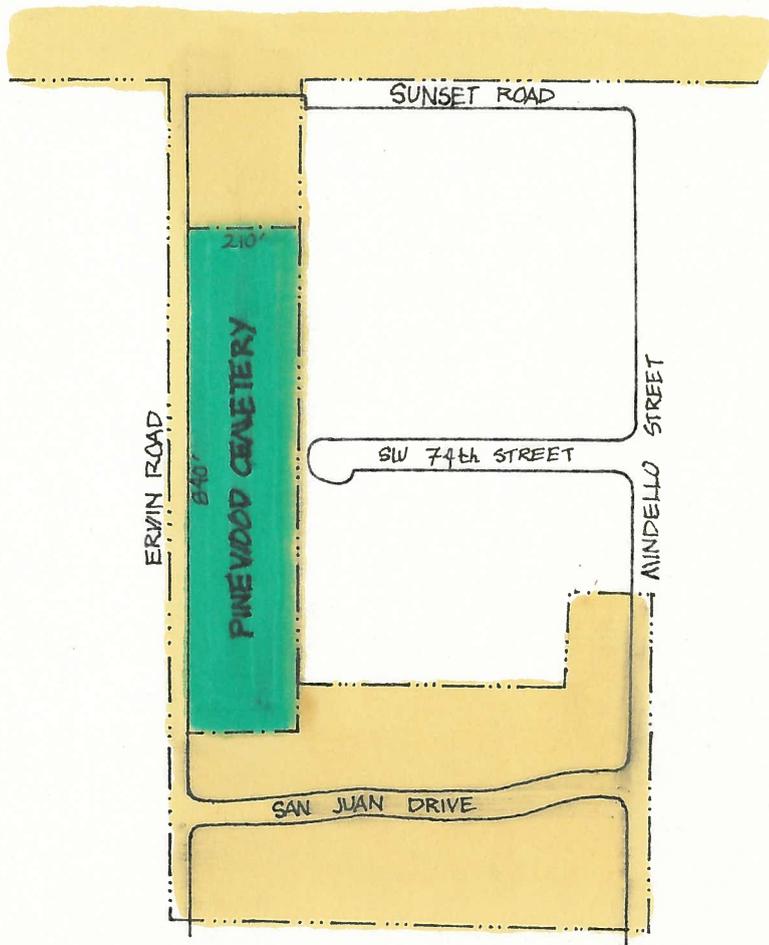
**STAFF CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS (Continued)**

Coral Gables is in a unique position to have within its City limits a substantial reminder of our pioneer heritage. Therefore the staff recommends designation of the cemetery. Because of a loss of many of the monuments and the general encroachment of natural vegetation, the cemetery does not fully convey its original purpose. The staff finds that the cemetery exists as a unique remnant of an undisturbed tropical habitat. The cemetery would therefore be a prime candidate for a nature sanctuary which would not conflict with its original identity as a cemetery. Interpretive markers, which describe our forebears and their contributions, can co-exist with other educational aides which illustrate and explain the indigeneous sub-tropical flora and fauna, and still maintain the cemetery as a quiet, contemplative space.



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Ellen J. Uguccione  
Historic Landmark Officer



HOPKINS MAP

VOLUME 4, PG. 57

320' = 1"

GENERAL VIEWS ILLUSTRATING THE VARIETY OF TREES & PLANT  
FORMS PRESENT ON THE SITE

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Erwin Road in foregrour

SELECTED EXAMPLES OF EXISTING GRAVE MARKERS

Richards Monument



Crockett Monument  
(front)



SELECTED EXAMPLES OF EXTANT GRAVE MARKERS



Recently installed Memorial-located in the center oval



Laesch Family markers

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