Unclaimed remains
More than 1,300 Northern State Hospital patients are estimated to be buried or interred in the cemetery or elsewhere in the Skagit Valley. Most of them do not have grave markers, but the markers that do exist bear only initials and numbers. They’re largely out of order and sunk beneath the surface of the soil.

Cemetery volunteer John Horne recently discovered more grave markers and suspected graves outside the cemetery fence. He also suspects that even more patients were buried north of this plot of land, based on evidence from early property descriptions.

Patients’ ashes were also buried in Northern State Hospital cemetery, between graves and in unknown locations. In 1983, a local funeral pastor discovered 200 food cans labeled with Northern State Hospital patient identification numbers. These cans were then buried at another cemetery.

Most grave markers appear to be disconnected from actual graves. Bones have long circulated in Seattle-Wallingford. That grave markers were repeatedly vandalized. It is possible they were picked up and moved.

In 2022–2023, aerial/in-person surveys conducted by John Horne using Northern State Hospital records, found more unclaimed remains. More than 1,600 Northern State Hospital patients are estimated to be buried or interred in the cemetery or elsewhere in the Skagit Valley. Most of them do not have grave markers, but the markers that do exist bear only initials and numbers. They’re largely out of order and sunk beneath the surface of the soil.

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The original cemetery plot covered 10 acres. Hospital records show it was originally 1.8 acres. The original cemetery plot covered 10 acres. It was originally 1.8 acres.

Cemetary Guide

Unmarked graves
Marked graves
Suspected graves

Metal fencing separates rows of grave markers. Some graves and markers are visible outside the fence near the picnic table.