

State TreasureS
Meridian monuments in Person County
(Roxboro)

Original description in the “*General Report on the Magnetic Survey of NC*”:

PERSON COUNTY, ROXBORO, 1898.—Observations made over the monument in the city’s cemetery, 1 ½ miles from town. The other monument is also in the city cemetery and true north of this monument.

The Person County meridian monuments, as described in the 1898 report above, were recorded as being “*in the city cemetery, 1-1/2 miles from town.*” I enlisted the assistance of two area residents, Ken and Becky Dalton, who have found and inventoried most of the burial sites in the Roxboro area. They quickly identified the “city cemetery” as the Burchwood Cemetery and remembered seeing the unusual monuments, but did not know what they were.

At my request, they visited the site in late December of 2005, at which time they took photographs (Figures 1 and 2) and wrote a brief description of how to find the markers. They also provided readings from their handheld Garmin GPS receiver. Their report is listed below. Certainly, they deserve credit for the “find”!

Hey Paul,

We got a chance to run to Roxboro this afternoon. Both markers are still there, about 200ft apart. The Burchwood Cemetery has 2 main entrances, both coming off 158/Old Durham Rd. About 300 ft from each gate on each respective paved drive, 5 ft north of each paved drive are the 2 markers. These 2 drives were obviously established from the beginnings of the cemetery around 1882.

NCGS is readable on each granite marker's top face and the date can probably be lifted from the southern marker with some enhancement. There are calibration numbers on the sides that may be readable with enhancement.

GPS readings:

Monument	Latitude	Longitude	Elevation	Accuracy at this reading
North	36 22 15.7 N	078 58 48.0 W	Fluctuated	14.3 ft
South	36 22 12.7 N	078 58 48.0 W	around 713 ft	13.6 ft

Thanks for including us in this project. We had seen one of the monuments about 2 years ago and puzzled over what it was. Now we know!

Ken and Becky Dalton
Flat River Gravefinders

On January 8, 2006, I had the opportunity to visit Burchwood Cemetery and verified the Dalton's report as being very accurate. My HH2 GPS reading on the north marker agrees exactly with the coordinates in their report. On the south marker, I obtained a latitude indication of 36.37016, which translates to N36 22 12.576. This differs from their reading by 0.1 second. Considering that I was using an amplified antenna at a height above ground of eight feet, the accuracy of the Daltons' GPS coordinates is impressive.

Other information about the meridian monuments:

- Each monument projects about one foot above ground.
- The monuments are approximately 285 feet apart.
- The line-of-sight is blocked by a large tree just north of the south meridian monument.

Burchwood Cemetery (Figure 3) is located directly east and across the highway from the Tar Heel Chevrolet auto dealership. It is also east of NCGS station TAR HEEL (FY1854), which was recovered as "good" in 2004 by the U.S. Power Squadron.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Folmsbee
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Figure 1. The north meridian monument in the Burchwood Cemetery near the city of Roxboro in Person County.





Figure 2. The south meridian monument in the Burchwood Cemetery near the city of Roxboro in Person County.





Figure 3. An infrared aerial photo of the Burchwood Cemetery, which is located south of Roxboro in Person County, showing the location of the north and south meridian monuments, the Tar Heel Chevrolet dealership, and NCGS station TAR HEEL (FY1854).