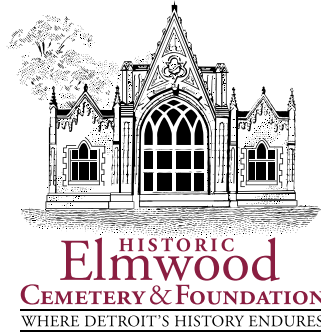


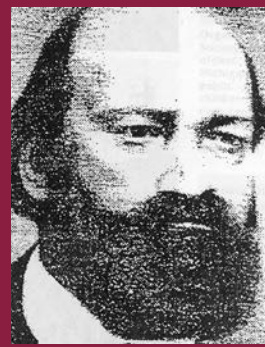
HISTORIC ELMWOOD CEMETERY  
**African American Heritage**



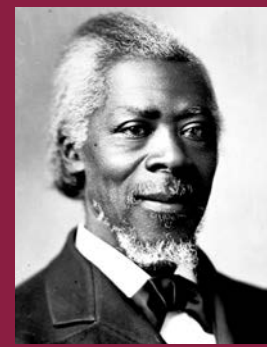
1200 Elmwood Avenue | Detroit, Michigan 48207 | Phone: 313-567-3453

[www.ElmwoodHistoricCemetery.org](http://www.ElmwoodHistoricCemetery.org)

9402 02/2025



George DeBaptiste



William Lambert



William Nathaniel "Sunnie" Wilson



Coleman A. Young

The partially wooded, somewhat hilly expanse of land near Vernor and Mt. Elliot that was incorporated in 1846 became the popular burial ground for blacks, said historian Norman McRae. "When you consider that in 1910 Detroit had a population of 300,000 people but only 5,000 were black. There weren't that many of us here. Those who were, were buried in Elmwood."

Listed here are some of the prominent African Americans buried in Elmwood.

**1 Dr. Charles Wright** (1918-2002)  
*Section 10, Lot 95*  
 Founder of Detroit's African American Museum which bears his name.

**2 William Ferguson** (1857-1910)  
*Section 10, Lot 54*  
 Michigan's first African American legislator, 1893. Successful plaintiff in landmark civil rights case before the Michigan Supreme Court, 1890.

**2 Alfred M. Pelham** (1901-1987)  
*Section 10, Lot 84*  
 Public Servant and poet. A financial genius. Wayne County Budget and Finance Director for 20 years. Consultant to Detroit Mayors Cavanaugh, Gribbs and Young.

**2 Benjamin Pelham Joseph** (1848-1928)  
**Robert** (1826-1908)

**10 Madame Emma Azalia Smith Hackley** (1867-1922)  
*Section O, Lot 26*  
 Teacher, author, vocalist, trained in Europe. The first African American graduate of the University of Denver Music School. Raised funds for scholarships and established the Vocal Institute of Chicago in 1912.

**11 Dr. Henry E. Thompson** (1879-1961)  
*Section S, Lot 145*  
 Popular Detroit medical doctor and founder of the first African American hospital in Georgia.

**11 Edward L. Gordon Mittie Gordon**  
*Section S, Lot 145*  
 Nationally noted educators, both husband and wife taught deaf children for over 25 years.

**12 Richard Bush** (1813-1895)  
*Section S, Lot 81*  
 Ex-slave, first African American U.S. Court bailiff, served for 27 years. Friend of U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Henry Billings Brown.

**12 Amanda "Minda" Lynch** (1755-1865)  
*Section S, Lot 81*  
 Former slave.

**13 D. Augustus Straker** (1840-1908)  
*Section S, Lot 10*  
 Known as the "Black Irish Lawyer." Brother-in-law of Fannie and John Richards. He was the attorney in the Ferguson v. Gies case in 1890. Principal of the St. Mary's School in Barbados at the age of 17. Michigan's first African American judge.

**Section 10, Lot 54**  
 Family founded the Detroit Plaindealer in 1883, the first successful African American owned newspaper in Detroit.

**2 Frederick Pelham** (1865-1895)  
*Section 10, Lot 54*  
 First African American graduate of U of M School of Engineering. Designer of Detroit train trestles, many of which are still standing.

**3 Harry P. Guy** (1870-1950)  
*Section 10, Lot 63*  
 Popular turn of the century orchestra leader and music arranger. Worked on the vaudeville circuit.

**4 Dr. James W. Ames** (1864-1944)  
*Section 11, Lot 150*  
 Leader of a group of 30 black physicians that formed the first African American hospital (Dunbar) in Detroit (1918).

**14 Rev. Robert Bradby, Jr.** (1916-1988)  
*Section S, Lot 71*  
 Pastor Greater King Solomon Baptist Church 1953-62. President Detroit NAACP 1942-50. President Wright Mutual Life Insurance Co.

**15 Charleszetta "Mother" Waddles** (1912-2001)  
*Section S, Lot 109*  
 Activist and spiritual leader. Founder of the Mother Waddles Perpetual Mission. Devoted her life to providing food, hope, and human dignity to the disadvantaged people of Detroit.

**16 Martha Jean "The Queen" Steinberg** (1930-2000)  
*Section U, Lot 43*  
 Church founder and owner-manager of radio station WQBH. Honored by Rock & Roll Hall of Fame for influence on contemporary music.

**17 Samuel Codes Watson** (1832-1892)  
*Section U, Lot 1*  
 First African American student at the University of Michigan. Detroit's first African American elected city officer, 1876 Board of Estimates (Tax Assessors).

**18 James H. Cole, Sr.** (1894-1970)  
*Section U, Lot 29*  
 Founder and former President of Michigan's largest African American owned funeral home.

**19 Tyrone Brooks** (1971-1990)  
*Section V, Lot 4*  
 First Michigan casualty during the Persian Gulf War.

**20 The Honorable Claudia House Morcom** (1932-2014)  
*Section 1, Lot 57*  
 Champion for Human Rights world-wide. First African American Wayne County Circuit Judge. First female associate in the

**5 Elizabeth Denison Forth** (ca.1752-1866)  
*Strangers Ground T-45 - 194G*  
 One of the first African American landowners in Detroit and Pontiac. Ex-slave who fled to Canada with the help of Col. Elijah Brush in 1807. Worked for the John Biddle family for over 30 years. Money from her estate was used to build St. James Episcopal Church on Grosse Ile.

**6 Julian P. Rodgers** (1916-1980)  
*Section M, Lot 85*  
 Judge of Common Pleas Court for 13 years. President of Detroit Urban League.

**7 John C. Dancy** (1888-1970)  
*Section M, Lot 91*  
 Director of Detroit Urban League for over 30 years. Founded Green Pastures, a camp for disadvantaged children.

nation's first integrated law firm. Inducted into Michigan Hall of Fame.

**21 Marcena Taylor** (1911-1994)  
*Firemen's, Lot 11/12-1*  
 One of the first African Americans hired by the Detroit Fire department. First African American battalion chief.

**22 Curtis Randolph** (1955-1977)  
*Firemen's, Lot 11/12-1*  
 First Detroit African American firefighter to die in action. The Detroit Fireboat is named for him.

**23 Lomax B. Cook** (1874-1970)  
*Section 2, Lot 50*  
 Considered the best barber in Detroit during the late 1800s. Known throughout the Midwest as an unbeatable checkers player.

**8 Theodore Finney** (1827-1899)  
*Section O, Lot 80*  
 Well-known violinist and band leader. His orchestra was an important Detroit institution for over 20 years and served as training ground for some of Detroit's finest musicians.

**8 Fred Hart Williams** (1882-1961)  
*Section O, Lot 80*  
 Patron of the arts, writer, historian and civil servant. His family came to Detroit in 1849 via the Underground Railroad.

**9 Francis E. L. Preston** (1844-1929)  
*Section O, Lot 61*  
 Temperance advocate, organizer and lecturer for National Christian Temperance Union, 1870-1890. President of Michigan Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, 1900-1913.

**25 Arthur Moses Bowman** (1916-1988)  
*Section 5, Lot 89*  
 Distinguished Wayne County Jurist. Member of Bethel AME Church, involved in many civic organizations.

**26 Dr. Wm. Thomas Love** (1901-1966)  
*Section 4, Lot 64*  
 First African American appointed Medical Examiner for Wayne County. On staff of Women's-Hutzel Hospital.

**26 Josephine Harreld Love** (1914-2003)  
*Section 4, Lot 64*  
 Concert pianist. Founder Heritage House - Fine Arts Museum and Learning Center for Children.

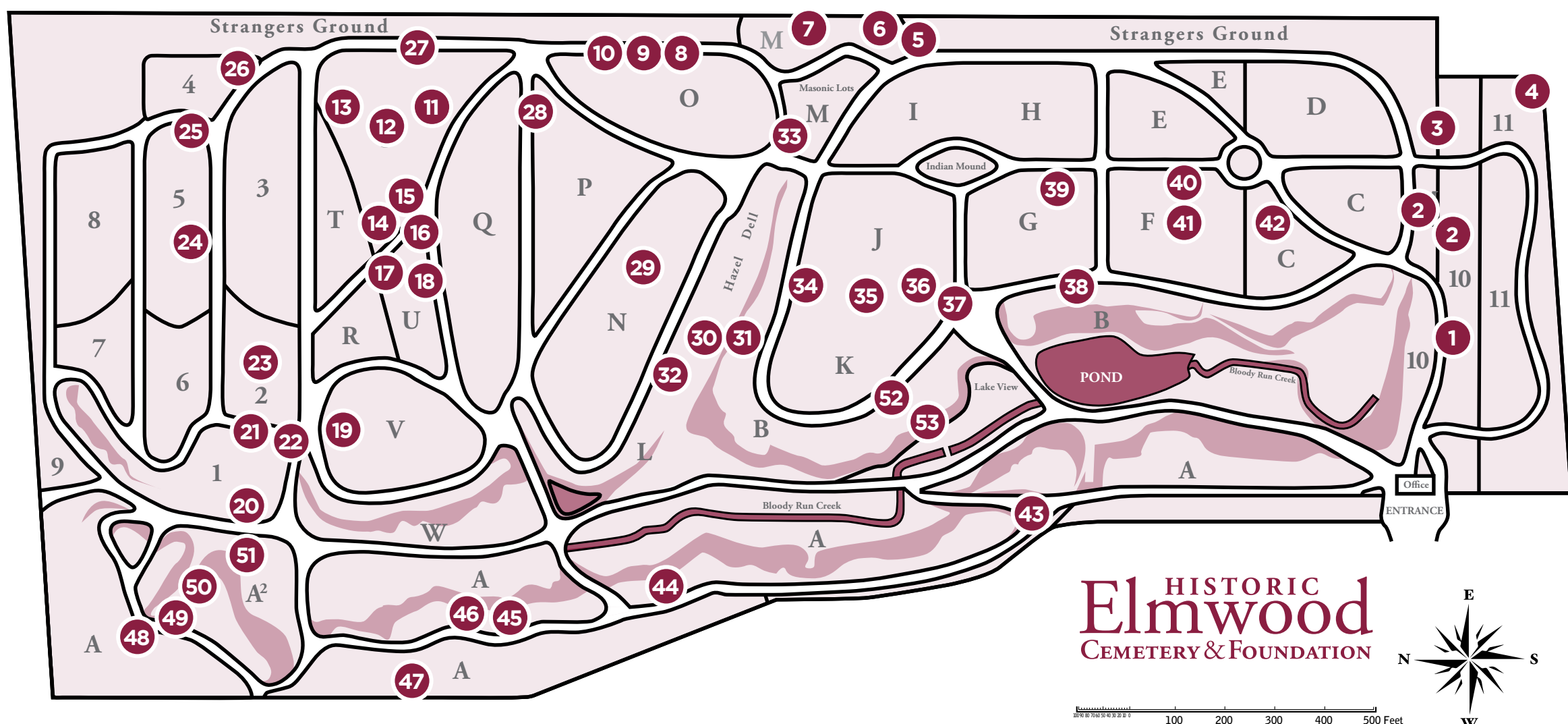
**27 Members of the 102nd U.S. Colored Infantry**  
 Formed entirely of volunteers 1863-65, the First Michigan Colored Regiment was organized at Camp Ward, which once stood on the site of the present day Duffield School. The Regiment saw service in South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. More than 1,400 men served in the regiment and ten percent gave their lives in battle. The regiment was disbanded in October 1865. Seventeen members of the troop are buried on the Michigan Civil War lot in Section S.

William H. Carter	London Floyd	Charles Gilbert
George H. Griggs	Greenbury Hodge	George A. Holmes
Albert J. Ratliff	William Riley	Frank Robinson
Robert K. Russell	William Shorter	Henry Smith
Augustus Stewart	Berry Thomas	Robert Thomas
Daniel B. Walker	Henry Williams	

**24 Kermit G. Bailer** (1921-1996)  
*Section 5, Lot 103*  
 Tuskegee Airman, Attorney for Ford Motor Co. and NAACP, head of Detroit Law Department. Appointed head of Civil Rights Commission-Housing Section by President Kennedy. Founding member Cotillion Club.

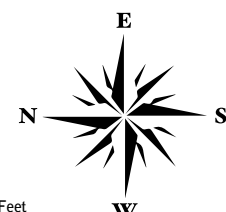
**28 Dr. Joseph Ferguson** (1821-1877)  
*Section P, Lot 25*  
 Physician, community leader and abolitionist. One of Michigan's first African American doctors. He was a practicing, licensed physician as a "freed man" in Richmond, Virginia before coming to Detroit.





## HISTORIC Elmwood CEMETERY & FOUNDATION

100 200 300 400 500 Feet



**28 William Webb** (1812-1868)  
*Section P, Lot 25*  
Community leader and Underground Railroad organizer. Hosted the March 12, 1859 meeting in Detroit between John Brown and Frederick Douglass.

**28 Charles Stone** (1869-1933)  
*Section P, Lot 25*  
Orchestra leader who, with his brother Fred Stone, played in the band that was the first in Detroit to play ragtime music. The band was a fixture at society parties, on the Put-in-Bay ferries, and at Fair Lane, Henry Ford's estate in Dearborn.

**29 John D. Richards** (1831-1882)  
*Section N, Lot 150*  
Brother of Fannie. Businessman and supporter of the Underground Railroad. Instrumental in organizing the 102nd U.S. Colored Infantry during the Civil War.

**29 Fannie Richards** (1840-1922)  
*Section N, Lot 150*  
Detroit's first African American school teacher in the public school system. Educated in Canada and Germany, she brought the concept of Kindergarten to Detroit. One of the founders of the Phyllis Wheatly Home for old ladies.

**30 Coleman A. Young** (1918-1997)  
*Hazel Dell*  
Tuskegee Airman, union organizer, Michigan State Senator, 1963-73. First African American Detroit Mayor, 1973-93.

**31 William Nathaniel "Sunnie" Wilson** (1909-1999)  
*Section B, Lot 122*  
Businessman, author and nightclub owner. Served as ceremonial Mayor of Paradise Valley in Detroit.

**32 Billie Willis** (1930-1996)  
*Section L, Lot 21*  
First African American female Detroit Police Precinct Commander. Involved with many civic organizations.

**33 Wilson A. Copeland** (1917-1991)  
*Section M, Lot F4*  
Tuskegee Airman, U.S. diplomat in Africa 20 years. Owned a fishing fleet in West Africa. Son-in-law of Rev. Charleston.

**33 Rev. James A. Charleston** (1887-1961)  
*Section M, Lot F4*  
Pastor St. Paul A.M.E. Church for 28 years. Built the largest African American church in U.S.

**34 Thomas "Beans" Bowles** (1927-2000)  
*Section J, Lot 1*  
Popular musician, teacher, mentor, promoter and night club owner. Played with and founded several bands. Discovered and promoted musical talent in Detroit. Involved with the Motown organization.

**35 Ernest E. Rodgers, Jr.** (1934-2014)  
*Section JK, Lot 4*  
Woodwinds Musician who toured with Motown stars and Jazz greats. Educator who shared his love of music with Detroit youth.

**36 Lorenzo C. Wright** (1926-1972)  
*Section J, Lot 94*  
Won the Olympic gold medal in the 400-meter relay at the 1948 London Olympics.

**37 Chief (Dr.) Augustine Kayode Kole James** (1945-2010)  
*Section JK, Lot Kole James*  
Medical visionary established Professional Medical Centers, ProCare Health Plan – a Medicaid HMO, and ProCare Plus which provided health care to Wayne County residents.

**38 Robert Millender, Sr.** (1916-1978)  
*Section B, Lot 37/38*  
Attorney, campaign manager for Mayor Coleman A. Young and U.S. Congressman John Conyers. Millender Center was named in his honor.

**38 Joyce Garrett** (1931-1997)  
*Section B, Lot 37*  
First African American female to serve as a Foreign Service Officer for the U.S. State Department. She served in Caracas, Venezuela.

**39 William Lambert** (1819-1890)  
*Section G, Lot 90*  
Community leader, agent for the Underground Railroad and organizer of the "African Mysteries." Owned a successful tailoring business.

**40 John Bailey** (1826-1871)  
*Section F, Lot 59*  
Musician. Popular local band leader with friend Theodore Finney, Lot 80-O. The Bailey & Finney Orchestra was among the first to feature syncopated music.

**41 James Robinson** (1753-1868)  
*Section F, Lot 61*  
Fought in the American Revolution and in the War of 1812. Was decorated for bravery after the Battle of Brandywine by General Lafayette. The oldest person buried in Elmwood, he died at the age of 115.

**42 George DeBaptiste** (1816-1875)  
*Section C, Lot 24*  
Former White House steward and friend of President Harrison. Successful Detroit merchant, he used his ships to transport runaway slaves to Canada.

**43 Jacques "Jack" Surrell** (1915-2003)  
*Section A, Surrell Island*  
First Detroit African American host of late night jazz program, "Sunday with Surrell" and "The Talk of the Town."

**44 Dr. Norman McRae** (1925-2010)  
*Section A, Lot 98*  
Avid researcher and author of African American history. Director of Social Studies, Fine Arts, and the Children's Museum for Detroit Public Schools. Designed and taught first black history course at Wayne State University.

**45 Dudley Randall** (1914-2000)  
*Section A, Lot 104*  
Detroit's appointed Poet Laureate. Nationally known lecturer. Founder of Broadside Press.

**46 Jim Ingram** (1938-1994)  
*Section A, Lot 106*  
Detroit radio personality, journalist.

**47 Theodore Guy Buckner, Sr.** (1914-1976)  
*Section A, Lot 116*  
Jazz saxophonist. Famous local band leader. Worked with Motown.

**48 Cora Brown** (1914-1972)  
*Section A2, Lot 27*  
First African American woman in the U.S. to be elected to a state senate, 1953.

**49 Edith Davis Gamble** (1919-1980)  
*Section A2, Lot 47*  
First African American female auditor employed by the IRS. Prominent civic activist.

**50 George Slaton** (1907-1975)  
*Section A2, Lot 48*  
Boxer Joe Louis' first trainer.  
**Jessie Slaton**  
*(Memorial)*  
First African American secretary hired in Detroit City Hall, 1933. First female referee for Records Court. Killed on Korean Airlines flight #007 over sea of Japan.

**51 Rev. Robert Bradby, Sr.** (1877-1946)  
*Section A2, Lot 200*  
Pastor Second Baptist Church 1910-46. President Detroit NAACP 1925-32.

**51 Rosa L. S. Gragg** (1904-1989)  
*Section A2, Lot 200*  
Advisor to Presidents Roosevelt, Kennedy and Johnson. First African American female to head the U.S. Welfare Commission.

**52 Clyde Hopkins, P.E.** (1933-2014)  
*Garden Plaza, #12*  
Director of City of Detroit Engineering who oversaw renovations to Cobo Hall, Detroit City Airport, Belle Isle Bridge; City Water and Sewage Engineer; managed city demolition program.

**53 Erma Henderson** (1917-2009)  
*Gallery A, Niche 8, Level E*  
First African American Detroit City Council woman and president.

**53 Reverend Herbert B. Robinson** (1929-2002)  
*Gallery D, Level C, Crypt 66*  
Preacher, True Love Baptist Church. Nationally known minister who worked with Martin Luther King, Jr.

**53 Don Davis** (1938-2014)  
*Galley A, Level C, Crypt 1*  
Grammy award winning music producer and songwriter who worked with top artists world-wide. Owner of the only African American bank in Michigan, First Independence Bank, served as Chairman and CEO.

**53 The Honorable Roy L. Roulhac** (1943-2014)  
*Gallery C, Level J, Niche 27*  
Administrative Law Judge, genealogist, author, civil rights activist.

