

WHV – Documentation and maintenance at a cemetery of the Moravian Church

Moravian Church Settlements (Herrnhut), Germany

PROJECT DATES

Cultural property inscribed on the Tentative List (2022)

31 August - 13 September 2025

THE SITE - Moravian Church Settlements is a proposed transnational extension of Christiansfeld, a Moravian Church Settlement (Denmark) founded in southern Jutland 1773 as a colony of the Moravian Church, a Protestant denomination in the free church tradition centred in Herrnhut, Saxony. The Herrnhut component, the 'mother' or 'founding town' of the Renewed Moravian Church, was established in 1722 in Saxony and emerged in step with the evolution of Moravian theology and societal ideals, defining the principles of all Moravian Church settlements.

OBJECTIVES - The project continues the work at God's Acre, the historic Moravian Church cemetery in Herrnhut, Saxony. Established in 1731, God's Acre is the prototype Moravian cemetery and contains over 6,300 grave plates spanning from the 18th century to the present. The primary objective is to expand the documentation and maintenance of the cemetery's remaining sections which have not yet been documented and intervened. These works will continue to provide support in preserving its historical and cultural significance, while contributing to the creation of this important archive that will serve the Moravian Church community. The project also aims to provide participants with practical experience in heritage documentation and conservation while deepening their understanding of Moravian cultural heritage.

ACTIVITIES - Participants will engage in documenting grave plates by photographing and recording details about their condition and inscriptions, with more focus on the archival tasks. Maintenance tasks will include cleaning the plates, removing invasive vegetation, and ensuring proper alignment to prevent further deterioration. Basic conservation measures will be implemented to stabilise and protect the grave plates from environmental factors. The educational component includes lectures and guided tours that explore the history of the Moravian Church, the cultural significance of Herrnhut, and the architectural and communal aspects of the settlement. These activities will offer participants both practical skills and theoretical knowledge in heritage preservation.

PARTNERS - Evangelische Brüdergemeine Herrnhut, German Verein der Förderer des Kulturdenkmals Gottesacker Herrnhut (Association of the sponsors of God's Acre in Herrnhut) and Herrnhut Municipality.

European Heritage Volunteers

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