

Monumental News

An occasional newsletter of the Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association

Fall 2013

A Valued Community Place

EMCA Board members Barbara Cowan and Roz Slovic recently reached out to a number of Eugene's civic leaders, lot owners, cemetery neighbors, and others to learn how they perceive the Eugene Masonic Cemetery.

They received some very thoughtful comments. They learned that many people value the cemetery. The responses contained many common themes, referencing the cemetery as a place for nature, reflection, stories, and community. The following quote by new board member Reisa Maddex is an example:

I find the Eugene Masonic Cemetery to be a place of peace. We walk through there very often and like to spend family time looking at headstones and trees and thinking about all of the stories that all of those people had to tell. It's exciting for Sylvie to see names on the stones that she knows from places around town. . . I love to see the names of many people that I knew in life. Having grown up here, it feels to me to be a continuation of a community that existed in life. The cemetery never seems sad to me; it feels vibrant and alive with nature and critters and the love of generations of family.

Many respondents remarked on the cemetery's natural and park-like landscape and how it engages visitors on a personal level. Some expressed their appreciation for its natural feel.

Brigid Flannery, cemetery neighbor, said she likes to observe *the trees, the flowers, the animals and even the people walking through it*. Kuri Gill, Oregon Commission on Historic Cemeteries, commented that *the native plants, the winding paths, the pleasant surprises around the corner are appreciated by the community*.

For others, entering into the cemetery's natural setting is a transformative experience. Bob Hart, Lane County Historical Museum director, wrote that *visits invite both reflection and contemplation*.

Several people, like Reisa, wrote about the stories written on the historical plaques. Cemetery neighbor Mike Helm wrote: *To walk there is to walk back in time, visit with Oregon's first governor or Eugene and Mary*

Skinner, to sense the despair of families losing so many children to disease, husbands losing wives in childbirth.

Nearly everyone said the cemetery represented some aspect of community, either in an historical sense or in a more personal context. Dan Goldrich, retired UO professor and cemetery dog walker, wrote: *My encounters there, especially with people who have lost young ones, make me feel so intimately connected with them and caring with and for them. These are extremely powerful, positive feelings, and they open up for me an ongoing inquiry regarding the meaning of those lives to mine and to the community.*

Twenty years ago the cemetery was a place people avoided. It was seen as derelict, neglected, overgrown, and dangerous. It's clear now that the community's views have significantly improved, that the cemetery is no

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Reisa and Sylvie Maddex. The Castleman monument is one of Sylvie's favorites because, "it looks like a castle."

The New Griffon Monument

Not only is this year the 100th anniversary of Hope Abbey, it also marks the 100th anniversary of the death of Wiley Griffon (1867-1913), one of Eugene's first black citizens. To honor Griffon's life, a new handsome basalt monument was placed on his grave in June.

Lane Community College instructor Mark Harris, his wife Cheri Turpin, and the LCC Black Student Union spent 15 years doing research and raising money to make the



Wiley Griffon Monument

monument a reality. It is part of a larger project, "I Too Am Eugene," a multicultural history endeavor that seeks to build awareness of Eugene's cultural diversity.

On June 7, Mark Harris and Black Student Union officers led a ceremony at Hope Abbey and at the grave site commemorating Wiley Griffon and honoring his place in Eugene's history.

Wiley Griffon arrived in Eugene in 1890 with a Mr. Holden, who established a mule-driven

streetcar system, Eugene's first form of public transportation. Griffon was the driver and eventually, in the owner's absence, ran the operation. When the streetcars ceased operating, around 1900, Griffon made his living as a janitor for the University of Oregon, a construction worker, a train porter, and a cook. He owned a home on the bank of the Millrace and had many friends.

When EMCA took over the cemetery from the Masons 20 years ago, no headstone identified Griffon's grave. EMCA placed a historical plaque on the site that described Griffon's life. If you would like to visit the new monument, it is just downhill on the path from the scatter garden.

What Do Board Members Do All Day?

Alex Brokaw lists three reasons for rejoining the EMCA Board: the naturalness of the site, the Masonic connection (her father was an active Mason), and "my vested interest in keeping the cemetery going." Alex was briefly on the original board in the early 1990s, and when that board began to sell cemetery lots, Alex purchased three. Her father, mother, and granddaughter are now buried in the cemetery. Alex has subsequently bought lots for the rest of her family.

Alex vividly remembers her father's memorial service at the cemetery. "Rain was pouring down, and the tent we erected barely managed to keep us dry. When it was time to lower the urn into the hole, which was very deep, we realized the urn would need to be dropped—that



Alex Brokaw

is, until my husband Bob whipped off his favorite wool scarf to make a sling to lower it gently. The scarf was buried with my father."

In 1989, Alex and Bob moved to Eugene from California. Alex operated a bed and breakfast in their guest house for five years, worked part-time at Bob's dental laboratory and, later, at her son's local architectural firm. But, first and foremost, she volunteered. Her nonprofits of choice were and are all part of Eugene's arts world. She served on the board of the Lane Arts Council, volunteered for the Eugene Symphony, and was a founding member of

DIVA and of the steering committee to Save the Jacobs Gallery. She currently is serving a second time on the Jacobs Gallery board of directors.

As a result of helping to success-

fully resurrect the gallery and establishing contacts with many local and regional artists, Alex and Bob became art collectors, chiefly of works by local artists they know.

Alex's most enjoyable function with the Eugene Symphony was making her guest house available to Marin Alsop and Miguel Harth-Bedoya when they were the symphony's artistic directors. She remains in touch with both of them.

For the EMCA Board, Alex is working with Kay Holbo and Jenny Peterson in fundraising and board member recruitment.

**Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association —
541-684-0949**

Board of Directors

John Bredesen	Lynette Saul
Alex Brokaw	Karen Seidel
Barbara Cowan	Roz Slovic
Dale Forrest	David Lynch,
Denny Hellesvig	Site Manager
Kay Holbo	Wendi Bondeson,
Reisa Maddex	Site Assistant
Donald Micken	Mary Ellen Rodgers,
Jenny Peterson	Cemetery Administrator

www.eugenemasoniccemetery.org

Recent Contributions

The following individuals and organizations contributed gifts between April 1, 2013 and October 1, 2013. We thank you all.

Monumental Giver (\$2,500+)

The Larson Family Foundation

Monument Rebuilder (\$500-\$2,499)

Lane County Historical Society

Alex and Carmen McBirney
Harold Busby and Lindsay Clegg Pierce
John S. Reynolds

Sponsor (\$100-\$249)

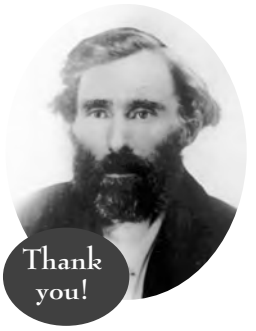
Norman and Patricia Bishop
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Gerald and Virginia Currens
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Volker Engelbert and Sheryl Engelbert-Scott
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Carol and Don Dumond
Ron Smith and Mary Jane Dunphy
Randy McGowan and Rachel Foster
Evelyn Gould
Thelma Greenfield
Hallis
Eileen and Phil Hanna
Phyllis Hawk
Julia Heydon
Isolde, Monica and Erica Hinds



Thank you!

Nadyne Neet and Charles R Simmons
Paul and Roslyn Slovic
Douglas Spencer
Rex and Shirley Stevens
Kalman and Kathleen Szekely
Carol Thibeau
Honey Vizer
Maggie Yokum

Friend (up to \$49)

Wayne and Susan Jewett
Violet Johnson
Daniel and Kathryn Kremer
Eugene and Sandra Luks
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Marcella Ramirez and Nancy Moody
Vicki Morgan and Michael Duran
Susan Nicholson
Harold and Joyce Owen
Shirlee Dillard Perkins
Jennifer Peterson
Elizabeth Potter
Christopher and Laura Ramey

Rex and Shirley Stevens in appreciation of Kay Holbo
Kalman and Kathleen Szekely in memory of Joseph and Augusta Morris
Joan Herbranson Agerter
Christina Armstrong
Mary and Paul Christensen-Moore
Stanton and Joan Cook
J. Richard and Theda Heinzkill
Peter Schnable and Theresa Orange
Loretta and Guy Plaa
Patricia Vallerand and Cheryl Roffe
Peter Steelquist
Kathy and Bob Welsh

Gifts in Honor and in Memory

Between April 1, 2013 and October 1, 2013 the Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association received gifts from the following. We wish to thank all who contributed and regret any errors or omissions.

Monument Rebuilder (\$500-\$2,499)

Lane County Historical Society in memory of Mary Dole and Janet El Gabry

Helmut Plant in memory of Carol Plant
Barbara Truax in memory of Donald Truax
Dan and Maureen Williams in memory of Patrick Williams

Supporter (\$50-\$99)

Joel DeVore in memory of Holly Weston
Evelyn Gould in memory of Howard Ingber
Phyllis Hawk in memory of N. Ray Hawk
Julia Heydon in memory of Jeanne Davies

Isolde, Monica and Erica Hinds in memory of L.D. Hinds
Daniel and Kathryn Kremer in memory of William and Sally Wood
Elizabeth Potter in honor of Kay Holbo

Christopher and Laura Ramey in memory of Calvin the Dog
Nadyne Neet and Charles R Simmons in memory of the Neet/Nelson family
Paul and Roslyn Slovic in honor of Kay Holbo

Rex and Shirley Stevens in appreciation of Kay Holbo
Kalman and Kathleen Szekely in memory of Joseph and Augusta Morris

Friend (up to \$49)

Joan Herbranson Agerter in memory of Howard Herbranson
Kathy and Bob Welsh in memory of the Hampton family

Sponsor (\$100-\$249)

Norman and Patricia Bishop in memory of James and Jimmy Bishop
Gerald and Virginia Currens in memory of Beth Currens Westcott
Volker Engelbert and Sheryl Engelbert-Scott in memory of Leslie Marsh
Gale Fizzman in memory of Rachele Fizzman
Nancy Galik in memory of Joseph Wesley and Jane Louise Galik
Saman and Sarah Harnsongkram in memory of Sheila Jones
Hugh Hiller in memory of Phyllis Hiller
Carol Jefferson in memory of H. Muriel and Bert Robinson
Donald and Sarah Klinghammer in memory of Daniel Klinghammer
Rebecca Weedon Lacy in memory of Bob, Jonnie and Sam Lacy
Geraldine Leiman in memory of John and Nancy Addison

Musical Offerings

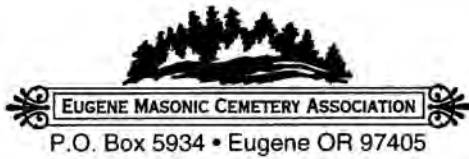
EMCA thanks all of the local musicians who made the second Music to Die For summer concert series in Hope Abbey another outstanding success. The musical groups put together delightful programs, and the large, enthusiastic audiences provided standing ovations that, in turn, produced generous encores. Musicians continue to rave about the Abbey's wonderful acoustics.

Musicians who contributed their time and talents were Carleen and Mike McCornack; Jim Dotson, Tom Erickson, David Bersch, and Sam Jones (KARASS); Dan Bilderback, Rich Spence, and Scoop McGuire (The Porch Band); and Richard Guy, Tom Gettys, and Dave Goudy (Heartwood Consort).

We also thank John Bredesen and Fran Ross for creating printed concert programs and Dot Dotson's Photo Finishing for printing them.



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*Newsletter by Karen Seidel
and Beneda Design*

Gravestone Studies Tour

In June the Association for Gravestone Studies national conference was held at Willamette University in Salem. Field trips were organized as part of the conference, and EMCA was honored to be asked to host a tour of the Masonic Cemetery and Hope Abbey. Tour leaders were John Bredesen, EMCA president, and Lisa Ponder, stone carver whose many monuments adorn the cemetery.

Tour participants hailed from all over the country, many of them from the east coast. Their responses were very gratifying. Kuri Gill, program coordinator for the Oregon Commission on Historic Cemeteries who organized the tour, said “they (i.e., the participants) were truly in awe of the cemetery; most had seen nothing like it before.” And Lisa commented that “several remarked that they wished they could have plots in ours, because it was the most beautiful cemetery they’d been in.”

Barbara Cowan, landscape committee chair, and David Lynch, site manager, provided assistance for the tour. And EMCA thanks all its many donors, volunteers, and friends, whose invaluable help has restored the site to a place of quiet beauty.

Community, *from page 1*

longer a neighborhood blemish. Visitors understand that many people have contributed, time, labor, and funds to make it the community asset it has become. Alice Parman, Lane County Historical Society board president, noted that these contributions *are a rare combination of vision, practicality, creativity, and know-how.* This is welcome news, and gratifying to the EMCA Board, Landscape Advisory Committee, staff, and the many volunteers who have brought about this transformation.

Barbara Cowan and Roz Slovic

COMING PRICE INCREASES

Burial Space for Sale

The Eugene Masonic Cemetery offers a variety of options for memorials, ashes, and earthen burials. Your purchase would provide a beautiful and meaningful space for your family to visit for generations to come. Prices for burial spaces throughout the cemetery and administrative fees will be raised on January 1, 2014. *For more information, phone the cemetery administrator at 541-684-0949.*