

# Monumental News

An occasional newsletter of the Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association

Spring 2010

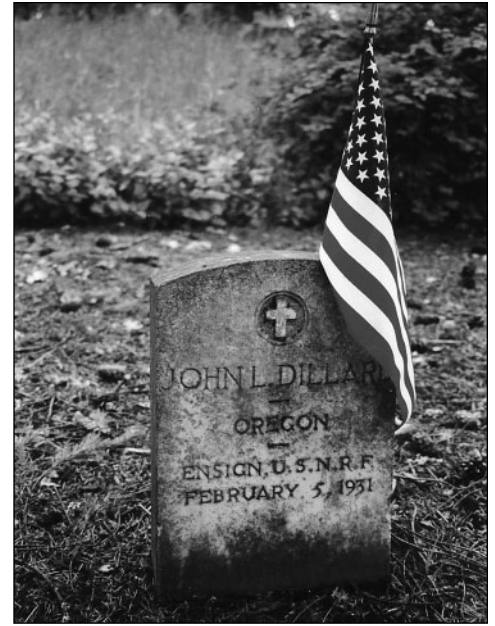
## Honoring Veterans on Memorial Day Weekend

Last year Memorial Day weekend activities celebrated the sesquicentennial year of both the state of Oregon and the Eugene Masonic Cemetery. This year we will honor the 92 veterans buried in the cemetery, whose service to our country spans the Civil War to the Vietnam War. This is fitting because Memorial Day was first established in the late 1860s by the Grand Army of the Republic to commemorate the Civil War dead.

Flags will fly over veterans' graves. Adrian Vaaler will play taps each day. Our brochure about Civil War veterans, who constitute the largest num-

ber of veterans buried in the cemetery, will be available. Our cake, designed and prepared by student chefs in South Eugene High School's "South Fork Pantry," will have a patriotic theme.

A special event, "Find the Veterans," will consist of a history hunt for children and families. Maps and clues will be offered that direct participants to a dozen veterans' graves. There they will find answers to questions posed about the veterans. Prizes will be offered to those who complete the "Find the Veterans" hunt. This activity will take place on Sunday between 1:00



*"Do not neglect to honor his grave."  
Ecclesiasticus 38:16*

and 3:00 pm.

Mary Ellen Rodgers, cemetery administrator, is coordinating the weekend events. For families wishing to visit the cemetery, both gates will be open on Saturday and Sunday, May 22 and 23, from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. During the week, May 24 through May 28, the front gate, at 25th and University, will be open from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. Both gates will again be

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## Annual Meeting

EMCA's annual meeting will be held on Thursday, May 20, at 8:30 am in the library of the First Congregational Church (23rd and Harris streets). All members are welcome.

## Take Care of the Cemetery Work Party Saturday, May 22 • 10:00 am – 1:00 pm

EMCA will host its annual work party on Saturday, May 22. The purpose of the work party is to enhance the cemetery's natural landscape, to make improvements in and around Hope Abbey and the new front gate, and to ensure that the cemetery looks beautiful for Memorial Day weekend.

Volunteers can choose to remove invasive species, plant native plants, weed and mulch mausoleum beds, place flags on veterans' graves, bark paths, clean marble in Hope Abbey, or tidy up the garden shed.

Barbara Cowan, landscape committee chair, will direct the work party. She asks volunteers to meet at Hope Abbey at 10:00 am (or, for a later start, at 11:30 am) and to bring gloves for all tasks and hand tools and/or shovels for landscape work. Refreshments and some tools will be provided.

This is a wonderful opportunity to work with others to prepare the cemetery for an important holiday.

# Plot Owners' Corner Memorial Day 2010

My childhood memories of Memorial Day evoke images of picnics with twenty cousins, grandmother's homemade ice cream, and endless outdoor games. In the United States, Memorial Day Weekend is celebrated as the unofficial beginning of summer: barbecues, family gatherings, trips to the coast, and sporting events. Formerly known as Decoration Day, the birthplace of this holiday was in 1866 in Waterloo, New York. In 1868, Decoration Day was officially designated to honor Union soldiers of the Civil War by the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR). The holiday was to be celebrated on May 30th because that date was near the reunification

of the North and South after the war. The GAR proclaimed:

"...We should guard their graves with sacred vigilance. All that the consecrated wealth and taste of the nation can add to their adornment and security is but a fitting tribute to the memory of her slain defenders. Let no wanton foot tread rudely on such hallowed ground. Let pleasant paths invite the coming and going of reverent visitors and found mourners. Let no vandalism of avarice or neglect, no ravages of time, testify to the present or to the coming generations

that we have forgotten, as a people, the cost of a free and undivided republic."

This tradition was not without controversy. Many states in the Confederate South refused to celebrate Decoration Day due to lingering hostility toward the Union Army, and few veterans of the Union Army were buried in the South. Some communities celebrated the day by commemorating both the Union and Confederate casualties buried in their cemeteries.

After World War I, men and women from other conflicts were also honored.



Emblem representing the J.W. Geary Post No. 7, Eugene, Oregon.

*continued on page 5*

## Volunteer Extraordinaire

You have received this newsletter, compliments of Mary Breiter. For the past five years Mary has been the keeper, maintainer, and improver of EMCA's newsletter and donor mailing lists. These electronic lists are now 21st-century quality, thanks to Mary. She is currently developing a new e-newsletter mailing list, which in the near future will provide cemetery friends and neighbors with more frequent information about events in the cemetery.



Mary Breiter

Mary and her family—husband Scott Pratt, sons Alex and Aaron, plus Beatrice, the cat, and Quinn, the golden retriever—have lived in the Amazon Neighborhood for 15 years. Mary first became involved

with the cemetery in 2002 when she joined Barbara Cowan's Friday morning work parties and learned all about weeding, native plants, and the cemetery's landscape plan.

Mary is a project manager for a multi-national company based in Atlanta, Georgia, that performs third-party claims processing for other companies. She manages projects to upgrade software used in workers compensation claims, and, according to Mary, serves as a translator—"I translate between the people who need new software and the people who write the software." She works out of her home and admits that it's curious working with colleagues she's never met.

Mary's volunteer activities include more than her contributions to the Masonic Cemetery. She is also a member of the Eugene Opera board of directors, a SMART reader at Camas Ridge School, and treasurer of the Koinonia Center, the campus branch of the Presbyterian Church. Say "hi" to Mary and Quinn when you see them walking in the cemetery.

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

### Board of Directors

Alice Adams	Alex McBirney
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Jim Luckey	Cemetery Administrator

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

# What Does the Future Hold for the Cemetery's Landscape?



1859: What the site may have looked like

Last year when the Masonic Cemetery celebrated its sesquicentennial, the cemetery's landscape looked very different than it did in 1859. In particular, the Douglas-fir canopy did not exist 150 years ago. Similar to Skinner Butte, the hilltop was once an open meadow.

One hundred and fifty years from now, will the cemetery's hilltop still be covered with Douglas-fir trees, or will palm trees suited for a vastly warmer climate be growing there instead? And what is in store for the cemetery's mid-story? Will cholla cactus take the place of vine maple? And will bougainvillea take the place of wild honeysuckle?

During a recent strategic planning session for the cemetery's landscape, two local experts, botanist Bruce Newhouse and horticulturist Whitey Lueck, assured attending cemetery board members and site manger David Lynch that the potential impact from global climate change would be far less dramatic. Bruce explained, "The winters will more than likely get wetter for longer, and the summers dryer for longer," but the impact over the next 150 years will not be significant. And the changes, Whitey

commented, need not be "cause for regret." The warming trend, for example, will cause the cemetery's oak savannah to gradually expand uphill, increasing its habitat. This, in turn, will also increase the range of the cemetery's existing upland prairie along with its wildflowers, such as mule's ears and rose checker-mallow.

Interestingly, Bruce, Whitey, and David all thought a natural disaster, such as a strong south wind, a major earthquake, or perhaps even a fire, was more likely to occur—and



2009: Douglas fir canopy

with greater impact on the landscape. This prediction is based, in part, on the fact that most of the cemetery's fir trees are showing visible signs of stress caused by damaged leaders and by a debilitating fungal disease called butt rot. Due to their present weakened state any severe weather pattern could easily cause many of them to fall. For example, just last month, one tree was taken down by the Good Friday wind storm.

It's difficult to prepare for this event not knowing when and if it

will ever occur, but one recommendation was made: Start planting, in and amongst the cemetery's Douglas-firs, a mix of native coniferous tree species to add diversity. Suggestions included hemlocks, incense-cedars, redcedars, and yews, as well as the broadleaf evergreen chinquapin.

Before the session ended, the group's discussion shifted to the more immediate future. Both Bruce and Whitey believe the cemetery's camas field is a valuable natural resource and proposed that certain methods be employed to increase the survival rate of emerging camas seedlings. They also encouraged cemetery board members to consider developing an upland prairie restoration plan for the area. There was a lot of enthusiasm for this idea and all the educational opportunities it would provide.

For the foreseeable future it is the intent of the Masonic Cemetery's board of directors to continue to steward the cemetery's landscape using sustainable strategies that are compatible with the ideals of the Rural Cemetery tradition.

*Barbara Cowan  
Landscape Coordinator*



2159: Palm Trees?

# The Year 2159

Last year was the 150th anniversary of the Eugene Masonic Cemetery. When created by the Masons in 1859 (the same year that Oregon became a state), the cemetery was two and one-half miles from Eugene City. It's doubtful that the cemetery's founders could have foreseen the building of Hope Abbey Mausoleum in 1913, the extensive Douglas-fir canopy that graces the site today, or the encirclement of the cemetery by dense residential development and busy city streets. The natural, social, and economic forces that brought all this about would have been just as difficult to forecast in 1859 as it is for us now to crystal-ball the conditions that will shape the cemetery in the next 150 years.

Presently, in 2010, the cemetery and Hope Abbey are in a reasonably healthy state, both physically and financially. The grounds are well maintained, and Hope Abbey is once again a place of serenity and beauty with stained glass windows being created and installed by John Rose as funds permit. Since the formation of the Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association (EMCA), which assumed ownership of the cemetery in 1994, a lot of hard work has successfully returned the site to what it was meant to be: a dignified final resting place for those who have passed on. The space also gives the feeling of a peaceful city park for the many people who walk the manicured paths, enjoy the wildflowers, and contemplate nature.

So what of the future? What will

these ten acres look like in 2159 and how will they be used? Barbara Cowan's article (page 3) provides some clues about the physical landscape. But what about the business side of the operation? What needs to be done to continue maintaining the landscape, Hope Abbey, and the cemetery's historic significance for the tercentenary celebration? Many, if not most, of the problems in past years resulted from neglect or indifference caused by lack of funds, lack



*Wheelchair-accessible Entrance Porch*

of manpower, and lack of leadership. Today EMCA's two part-time employees, dedicated board of directors, and enthusiastic volunteers have shown that the buildings and grounds can be satisfactorily maintained. The challenge for us is to assure that the maintenance continues in this fashion for the next 150 years and, hopefully, well beyond.

A key factor in EMCA's successful operation in recent years has been an adequate income stream. Our current operating budget is approximately \$65,000. About a third of our income is the result of

sales of lots, crypts, and niches. Another significant portion comes from individual and corporate donations. Grants from various organizations have helped fund capital projects. This brings us to the most critical problem facing us in the future: operating cash.

We clearly depend heavily on lot and crypt sales. Based on the rate of past sales, our inventory of coffin burial space will probably be depleted in the next six to ten years. It is imperative that we develop alternative sources of income. The most important source that we can identify at this time is sustainable interest from an endowment fund. Two years ago we established such a fund with the Oregon Community Foundation. It has a current value of about \$100,000, thanks to some very generous gifts. We must continue to build this fund. This is crucial to ensure the long-term health and beauty of the cemetery.

Contemporary attitudes about appropriate burial are moving more and more towards cremation, especially on the west coast and in some New England states. Cremation rates in Oregon are forecast to rise from 57 percent in 2009 to as much as 65 percent by 2025. We are prepared for this. Hope Abbey has many available niches for cremains, and our policies allow for ground burial as well. We can add more space for cremains both inside and outside Hope Abbey. A major related project under consideration is a Memorial Wall in the Public Square. It would be designed to complement the open feeling of the area, but would provide space for memorialization, similar to the Scatter Garden.

Other means of obtaining operat-

ing funds are being explored, such as using or renting the grounds and Hope Abbey for appropriate types of events, such as art exhibits (which have already occurred), large family picnics, lectures, or weddings. We are exploring the use of Hope Abbey with its wonderful acoustics as a recording studio. We have been approached by a mobile phone company to install a “hidden” antenna on the site, which could create a significant income stream if it were to happen. When the city of Eugene’s budget improves, we may approach the city with the idea of a partnership, since we already function as a de facto city park.

In planning for the foreseeable future, EMCA has several projects on its “wish list.” The list contains four major items for Hope Abbey: tuck pointing the entrance façade, replacing interior marble that has been stolen or broken over the years, resurfacing the terrazzo floor, and completing the replication of all the original stained glass windows. These will complement projects already completed in the cemetery, such as construction of the garden shed, Hope Abbey’s wheelchair-accessible front porch, and the new main

entrance gate. We have also done some major marble repair in Hope Abbey.

EMCA remains committed to historical research and educational outreach. Eugene’s early settlers, who not only built homes, started businesses, and raised families, created the community we live in today. Their leadership and civic pride—from which came schools, churches, public buildings, bridges, and the University of Oregon—need to be remembered, and we do this through brochures, plaques on their graves, cemetery tours, and newsletter articles. We already host students, from kindergarten age through college, for visits, research and art projects, and environmental studies.

And we are exploring other ways of sharing the incredible history that is in the cemetery. For example, we plan to create a “podcast” version of our walking tour brochure that can be downloaded onto an iPod or other MP3 player. It will provide information about the cemetery’s inhabitants as a person walks the paths. An email newsletter will soon be on line to complement our printed newsletter.

Oregon’s Commission on

Historic Cemeteries has called EMCA “a good example of how to run a historic cemetery.” And if you’ve visited recently, you know how important an asset the Masonic Cemetery is to the surrounding neighborhood and the city. Our task is to carry on and sustain the work that has been accomplished in the past 15 years. When 2159 arrives, we want Eugene to still be proud of the historic cemetery at 25th and University streets.

*John A. Bredesen, President*

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## Plot Owner, from page 2

Recent controversy has centered on the meaning of the holiday. In 1968, our government passed the Uniform Holidays Bill, which moved the holiday from the traditional date to a specified Monday to create a three-day weekend. The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) stated in a 2002 Memorial Day Address that transforming the day into a convenient three-day weekend had undermined the very meaning of the day. They felt the general public held a nonchalant observance of Memorial Day. With the recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan there has been a resurgence of respect for the deeper meaning of the day.

How will the Masonic Cemetery honor veterans on Memorial Day this year? We will offer taps played in the Public Square, flags flying on their graves, a cake bearing a patriotic design, and a “Find the Veterans” game for children and families. To learn more about Civil War veterans in our cemetery, pick up a copy of the Civil War brochure located outside the garden shed.

*Mary Ellen Rodgers  
Cemetery Administrator*



# Like Father, Like Daughter

The editor of Oregon Historical Quarterly magazine, in his March 1912 column, refers to Thomas Condon as “Oregon’s most illustrious scientist,” who “in the early sixties, while Oregon was yet a wilderness and isolated from the world, began an assiduous labor of love, that of reading the story of Oregon’s past as recorded in the exposed strata of rock. . .” The column, however, is not about Thomas Condon. Rather, it is about his daughter, Ellen Condon McCornack, and a new series of pamphlets about Oregon’s past history developed by the Oregon Historical Society for the edification of school children. The column is followed by the first paper in the series, “A Glimpse into Prehistoric Oregon,” written by Ellen McCornack.

Ellen was born to Thomas and Cornelia Condon in 1855 in Forest Grove, the second of eight children. Edward, her older brother, had enthusiastically gone fossil hunting for his father as a teenager. Tragically, “Eddy” died of pneumonia at age 18. Gradually, Ellen took over Eddy’s role as her father’s assistant. She attended Pacific University while the family was in Forest Grove and then transferred to the University of Oregon when her father accepted an invitation to become a faculty member of the new institution in 1876. By the time she graduated in 1878, valedictorian of the first graduating class of five students, she had studied geology with her father, had worked with him on

his specimens, and was considered his best student.

A year after she graduated, Ellen married Herbert McCornack, a young physician and friend from her student days at Pacific University. They spent eight years in California and Washington Territory, where he practiced medicine, and returned to Eugene in 1887 with their two young sons, Condon and Elwin. Thomas Condon had kept in touch with Ellen regarding his fossil findings and consultations with



Ellen Condon at age 23

other geologists; back in Eugene, she soon became his helpmate. The University of Oregon employed her to hear recitations in his biology classes so he could have more time for research. She taught his geology classes when he was traveling. Together, they classified and codified his fossil and mineral collection of several thousand specimens.

Ellen’s scholarship was acknowledged by the university’s second president, Charles Chapman. To stimulate his faculty to engage in productive research, President Chapman persuaded them to organize the Academy of Sciences of the University of Oregon. The academy was limited to 25 members and met once a month to discuss papers presented by its members. The charter members included most of the professors and four people from the community—three medical doctors (including President Chapman’s wife) and Ellen McCornack.

After Thomas Condon died in

1907, Ellen continued his professional work. She corresponded with eminent geologists in other parts of the country, such as John C. Merriam at the University of California-Berkeley, Henry Fairfield Osborn, president of the American Museum of Natural History in New York, and Oliver Hay at the U.S. National Museum in Washington, D.C. She edited the second addition of her father’s book, *The Two Islands and What Came of Them*, with the new title, *Oregon Geology: A Revision of Two Islands*. She also guest lectured in the UO’s geology classes and wrote scholarly articles on the Pleistocene period of Oregon’s history.

Ellen facilitated the purchase of her father’s collection of fossils and minerals by the University of Oregon. With the encouragement of John Merriam, UO President Campbell was persuaded to buy the collection for \$15,000. When Ellen agreed to accept three annual payments, Campbell was able to secure the regents’ approval to make the purchase.

In 1926, Ellen completed her manuscript of her father’s family and professional life. It was published by the University Press two years later, the year before Ellen died, with a foreword by Henry Osborn. In his preface to *The Odyssey of Thomas Condon* (Oregon Historical Society, 1989), Robert Clark states “Materials on Condon are extremely limited. The most valuable—indeed, indispensable—source is Ellen Condon McCornack’s biography, *Thomas Condon: Pioneer Geologist of Oregon (Eugene, 1928)*.”

Thomas and Cornelia Condon and Ellen and Herbert McCornack are all buried in the Masonic Cemetery.



# Recent Contributions

The following individuals contributed gifts October 1, 2009 – April 1, 2010. We thank you all.

## Monument Rebuilder (\$500-2499)

John Bredesen and Fran Ross  
Eugene Masonic Lodge #11 AF and AM  
Paul and Kay Holbo  
Jim Luckey  
Robert J. Trulaske, Jr. Family Foundation  
Karen Seidel  
The Hundredth Monkey Foundation  
Paul Wallace  
Charles and Leslie Wright

## Preserver (\$250-499)

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(Matching gift for Peter Steelquist's 12/21/09 gift)  
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Warren Wong

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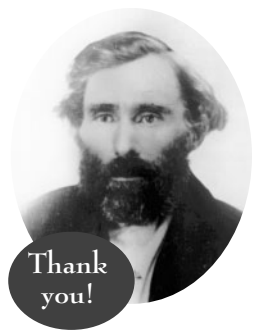
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Thank you!

Debbie and Shlomo Libeskind  
Kimberly Morton  
Brook Muller and Cathleen Corlett  
Mr. and Mrs. Theodore W. Palmer  
Alice Parman  
Larry Robidoux and Thelma Soderquist

# Gifts in Honor and in Memory

We wish to thank all who contributed and regret any errors or omissions. October 1, 2009 – April 1, 2010 the Masonic Cemetery Association received gifts from the following:

## Monumental Giver (\$2500 or more)

Gaines Foundation in memory of Carolyn Spector

## Preserver (\$250-499)

Robert E. and Sandra L. Brokaw in honor of Olivia Helen Brokaw and Harold A. Butler  
Robert E. and Sandra L. Brokaw in memory of Olivia Helene Brokaw  
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Lynette Saul in memory of Jim

## Sponsor (\$100-249)

Jay L. Austin in memory of Laurence Austin, UO Class of 1931, and Evan Roy Austin, UO Class of 1970  
Jacqueline Booth in memory of the Booth Family  
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Rebecca Lacy in memory of Bob and Jonnie Lacy  
Robert and Debbie Laney in memory of Marian Larson Trummer

Elaine Lawson and Greg Brokaw in memory of Olivia Lawson Brokaw  
John and Lisa Manotti in memory of Harold and Judith Loson  
Nancy K. McFadden in memory of Scott McFadden  
Rene Speer in memory of Noel Wicks  
Max and Anne Stephenson in memory of Murphy  
Carol Stroud in memory of Jim Stroud  
Susan Whitney in memory of Amelia Davis  
Carol Williams in memory of Luckey and Leasure family members

## Supporter (\$50-99)

I.R. Carlisle in memory of Dick Carlisle  
Anne and Terry Carter in memory of Bob Lacy  
Evelyn Wood Hile Claycomb in memory of the Wood Family  
Anne Eastland in memory of the Eastland Family  
Julia J. Heydon in memory of Charles Dowd

Daniel and Kathy Kremer in memory of William and Sally Wood  
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Joan Agerter in memory of Howard F. Herbranson  
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Joycelyn Proust in memory of J.W. Morgan and Alice Georgianna Morgan  
Richard B. Romm in memory of Robert Gault  
Betty Taylor in memory of Toby Kathleen Wiley and Robert Carolan in memory of Donald T. Wiley

**Yes!** I want to help the Eugene Masonic Cemetery by becoming a member of the Eugene Cemetery Association. Membership is yearly.

- Friends ..... up to \$49
- Supporters ..... \$50-99
- Sponsors ..... \$100-249
- Preservers ..... \$250-499
- Monument Rebuilders ..... \$500-2,499
- Monumental Givers ..... \$2,500 or more

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

- I am a Mason.
- I am a plot owner.
- I am an Amazon neighbor.
- I want my contribution to go for the mausoleum.
- I want my contribution to go for care of the landscape.
- My contribution is in memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail contribution to Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association, P.O. Box 5934, Eugene, OR 97405  
Your contribution is tax-deductible and warmly appreciated.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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*Newsletter by Karen Seidel  
and Beneda Design*

## Memorial Weekend, from page 1

open on Memorial Day weekend from 10:00 to 4:00 pm. Please be respectful if a funeral or memorial service

is in progress during your visit.

We invite you to join us to honor our veterans. All events are free and open to the public.

## May 29–31: Memorial Day Weekend

- **10:00 am to 4:00 pm:** Hope Abbey open to the public. Fresh-cut flowers will be available for placement on graves.
- **On Display:** "Cemetery Scenes" slide show; landscape and project exhibits; genealogy information available.
- **Taps will be played at noon** in the Public Square (at 12:30 on Monday).
- **Refreshments** will be available on Sunday afternoon.
- **Sunday, 1:00 to 3:00 pm:** "Find the Veterans" history hunt, beginning at Hope Abbey.

## Thursday, June 3: 7:00 to 9:00 pm

**Sacred Harp Singers'** eighth annual performance of folk hymn singing in the "shape note" tradition. All are welcome to participate in this joyful music making in Hope Abbey.

## Wish List

EMCA would like to crown the cemetery's garden shed with an old-fashioned weather vane. Built in 2002, the garden shed was modeled on Jacksonville



*A Peregrine Falcon Weather Vane*

Cemetery's 1914 shed, and its features are typical of Eugene's old outbuildings. An historical weather vane is the only item that's missing. If you have an unused weather vane stored in a basement or attic and would like to donate it to the cemetery, please contact Denny Hellesvig at (541)485-6124 or hellesvig@comcast.net.