

Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association
Oral History Project

Narrator:

ALICE ADAMS

Interviewed by:

ALEX BROKAW

KATE THORNHILL

April 10, 2021

(recorded using *Zoom*, a telephone web conferencing tool)

NARRATOR

Alice Adams has been active with the Eugene Masonic Cemetery since the 1950's. Her husband, Murray Adams, was a member of Eugene Masonic Lodge #11 that owned the cemetery and was responsible for its upkeep. She, Murray, other Lodge members, and the DeMolay (teen Masonic organization) spent years going to the cemetery to clear brush from grave markers and paths.

In 1994 when it became known that a concerned citizens' group was forming to "save the cemetery," she attended the first meeting. When the EMCA became a 501(c)(3) corporation, in 1995, Alice was a founding board member. She retired from the board in 2012 when she moved to Washington.

Alice was invaluable to the board when events were held—they depended on her to plan and carry out food needs for special occasions. But she was also invaluable, even more so, for her memory of the history of the cemetery. Since 2012 she has traveled back every year to visit her beloved Murray on Memorial Day.

This transcript has been lightly edited for readability. The reader should bear in mind that they are reading a transcript of the spoken word, rather than written prose. The following transcript has been reviewed, edited and approved by the narrator.

Brokaw: This oral history interview is part of the Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association's oral history project. This interview will be conducted by Alex Brokaw, an EMCA board member with assistance from Kate Thornhill, an EMCA digital archives volunteer and technical advisor Carolina Hernandez, an EMCA digital archives volunteer. Today's interview is with Alice Adams on June 19, 2021, taking place on Zoom, a web conferencing tool. The recordings will be made available for research and educational purposes for future EMCA boards, staff, and the general public.

Alice, do you agree to be recorded for this project? And do you give your permission for EMCA to preserve and make available your recorded and transcribed interviews?

Adams: I do.

Brokaw: Thank you. Okay. In introducing Alice, I'd like to say that she was a founding member of the EMCA board and I'm going to start the questions right now. Alice, where were you born and raised?

Adams: I was born and raised in Buena Vista, Oregon, which is a small town on the Willamette River and it was established by people in the wagon trains in 1843 and 1846. And consequently, I was well-versed in old family cemeteries.

Brokaw: Oh, interesting. Where is— did you say Buena?

Adams: Buena. B-U-E-N-A. It's on the river between Independence and Albany.

Brokaw: Did you have any surprising or significant experiences that affected the direction of your life?

Adams: I went to the University of Oregon in pre-nursing, and I couldn't pass the physical. So, I didn't get in the nursing school. I got married to my husband whom I met there. And, he was from old pioneer families too. So, this is how we got into this sort of thing. When he joined the Lodge [Masonic Lodge], he became interested in the cemetery because of working with the Order of DeMolay [Masonic youth organization for boys between ages 12 and 21], teenage boys who needed a service project, and that's where we got involved with the cemetery because he'd take the boys up there to work.

Brokaw: And I expect that was to clean brush and—

Adams: What we did was, we just opened up the streets and alleys. We didn't do anything to the lots.

Brokaw: Well that probably really needed done too. The cemetery was in such a bad shape for—

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- Thornhill: And during what time period was this?
- Adams: That would have been in the '50s and '60s—well from the '50s on actually.
- Brokaw: And Alice, what was your maiden name?
- Adams: Prather. P-R-A-T-H-E-R.
- Brokaw: So, two—Prather and Adams—two historic Eugene families then. Or—
- Adams: My mother's family was Smith.
- Adams: When they opened up the Applegate trail, they were on the first train through.
- Brokaw: Oh my gosh!
- Brokaw: What was your career before retiring?
- Adams: I was a radio operator for Emerald Loggers Radio.
- Brokaw: Can you explain that a little bit?
- Adams: Well, they were the company, we were the communication between the men in the woods and what they needed done. I didn't operate, I didn't order anything. I just was—I was their communication situation. The government said that you had to have communication for [an] emergency situation within 15 minutes. They don't put telephones on trees.
- Brokaw: All right. [laughs] How did that work anyway?
- Adams: Well, we covered the whole state of Oregon, so I was responsible for about two thousand men, actually.
- Brokaw: Oh, my goodness, it sounds so interesting. Do you have another question, Kate?
- Thornhill: I do actually.
- Thornhill: Just to circle back a little bit. When you were talking about the trails and the upkeep and maintenance of them in the 1950's and moving onward, what was that process like?
- Adams: You're talking about the in the cemetery?
- Thornhill: Yes.
- Adams: Okay, we would take—the boys would take—some of the men from the Lodge also were there, it wasn't just the boys alone.
- Thornhill: And is that the Masonic Lodge?

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Adams: Yes, Masonic Lodge, because the DeMolay is sponsored by Masonic organizations. And we used hand mowers and we used shears. We used all kinds of hand tools. And it was a job and half.

Brokaw: And were you there to help too?

Adams: Sometimes I was. But most of the time I had to run my office.

Brokaw: Okay.

Adams: But I was—anytime I could, I was up there with them.

Thornhill: So, you've been volunteering for a long time with the cemetery before it was established in the '90s.

Adams: Long before that.

Brokaw: How long?

Adams: The cemetery board kind of inherited me if the truth were known.

Brokaw: [laughs]

Thornhill: Could you tell us more about that inheritance?

Adams: Well, my husband had died [1990], but I was still interested in what was going on. So I was, so I say, when they put out a notice for anybody that was interested to come to those meetings, I was right there.

Thornhill: And what was your, what is your husband's name?

Adams: Murray.

Thornhill: Murray?

Adams: Murray Dean [Adams]

Thornhill: Thank you.

Adams: And I had bought a cemetery lot there so—

Brokaw: So, he's there.

Adams: Yes, he's there.

Brokaw: All right. I can hardly ask this question. I mean you pretty much answered it. Why is the cemetery so important to you, but maybe there are more reasons, too.

Adams: Well, it's more than personal because I was interested in the history of the place, the stories of some of the people who are there, and the things that happened in the cemetery. And then, some of the neighbors thought that the Lodge didn't care at all about the place. And it was never true. But there was never any money to

take care of it. So, it was all a volunteer sort of thing. It was an old pioneer cemetery that the town happened to grow out around.

Brokaw: Yes. I've heard some of those stories. In 1995, the cemetery became a 501(c)(3) nonprofit with the overall mission to rehabilitate and preserve the cemetery. As you said, you were inherited, but who asked you to be on the board and how did all that look?

Adams: Well, I haven't gotten the names here in front of me. Which kills me—kills my soul. What was the name of the lady?

Brokaw: Kay Holbo?

Adams: Kay.

Brokaw: Yes.

Adams: It wasn't the case of being asked. It was the case of everybody came to kind of a volunteer meeting and we just kind of fell into it. It wasn't the case of anybody asking anybody, in particular, except I'm sure that Kay was one who was asked.

Brokaw: Yes, did the city call this meeting with Kay leading the meeting?

Adams: I don't know who called it, but the city wasn't involved in it at all.

Brokaw: Not at all?

Adams: Not to my knowledge, anyway.

Brokaw: What committees, if you had committees at that time or in what capacity have you served on the board? What did you do on the board for the most part?

Adams: Well, I mostly was "there," I think. I was kind of a resource more than anything else, because my job required me to be at the office and I couldn't actively come up. I was there on projects, anything that involved food, I was usually in the middle of.

Brokaw: So, event planning and—

Adams: Yes, that sort of thing.

Brokaw: All right, a woman after my own heart!

Adams: Well, I had a lot of, I had a lot of equipment from other things and a lot of the original equipment for that sort of thing was mine that I gave to the cemetery.

Brokaw: I see and when did you start being open for Memorial Days, about what year?

Adams: Well, right at the beginning, actually. We were always open for a week before and usually three or four days afterward, because people would come in like they used to from when there were still families available to work on the individual

cemetery lots. They would come at various times and also for the mausoleum, even though the mausoleum was having real major problems. We had the keys—my husband had the keys and so consequently I met all kinds of people that would come to the cemetery during that time and sometimes other odd times.

I can't remember his name because I don't have access to those papers anymore, [but] the president of CBS was—his parents are in the mausoleum [Hope Abbey] on the top, up on the top tier. [Note: Fred W. Friendly, president of CBS Entertainment, 1964–1966, was Samson (Sam) H. and Matilda Friendly's grandson. They are interred on a middle tier in Hope Abbey Mausoleum.]

Brokaw: Is that right?

Adams: There in the keeper and the Masonic records and you have those records with those things of those people.

But anyway, and then there's stories of Prince Lucien Campbell and his wife. [Fourth president of the University of Oregon.]

Brokaw: And they're in the mausoleum.

Adams: Yes, they're in a rental crypt that was never paid for.

Brokaw: What? Go through that again. (laughs)

Adams: Well, getting into that, there's a whole lot of stories. Okay, Prince Lucien Campbell was, when he died, he was still the Chancellor, I mean not the Chancellor, he was still President of the university—and his wife Susan. And when he died, they put him in a rental crypt and when she died, she was in the one right above him. Those end ones down there were rental crypts because you can tell by looking at the face [marble front] that they're different from the others.

Brokaw: What do you mean by rental crypt?

Adams: Well, they could rent a crypt and keep a body till it was ready to be sent on the train to wherever they were going to send it. And his never got—I think I'm almost positive because he came from Monmouth, the Christian college at Monmouth, which is now Western Oregon [University], and I'm almost positive that that's where they were going to go back to, but it never happened.

Brokaw: I guess they didn't have family to take care of that then.

Adams: Well, I think it was more money, it was during kind of a depression period.

Brokaw: I see.

Adams: I think it just, it just didn't happen.

Brokaw: Well then, we're lucky to still have them here, being near to the university and all.

Adams: Right.

Thornhill: And that's the University of Oregon?

Adams: Yes.

Brokaw: Do you have any other memories of odd things like that happening?

Adams: Well, yes, a lot of them actually. Some of those that were destroyed [mausoleum marble crypt plates (fronts) called shutters], the ones opposite the upper ones that were destroyed, across from where the Campbells are. Those plates were smashed by the guys that came in, they were going to move them up to Resthaven [cemetery in Eugene, Oregon]. And whoever did it, just took a sledgehammer and smashed them, instead of removing them, like some of them were removed carefully and were preserved. That's why those are marked [to be] refaced or turned around in the other direction [back side of marble].

Brokaw: I see.

Adams: But they just vandalized them. And, of course, the stories are well known about the fraternities bringing students up for and leaving them in mausoleum overnight.

Brokaw: And how did they get in?

Adams: From those upper windows that were being replaced. They broke out those upper windows. They let them down on a rope and then left them for the night in the dark.

Brokaw: Oh boy. This is all very interesting. No one else has talked about this before. So—

Adams: Well, we actually have, the stories are there somewhere.

Brokaw: I mean on these recordings.

Adams: Oh, no, they probably didn't know about some of it.

Brokaw: Well, I'm glad we're talking to you!

Adams: And the front doors were beautifully screened, but they were open screening. They weren't closed like they are now because those are new doors. What they had done was people had gotten up and put a log chain through the screens and pulled the doors open. But they were doing it when World War II was around, they were after the copper.

Brokaw: I was going to say, those large copper doors—I thought they were original.

Adams: Well, the doors have been refaced. They're not. They're not the way they were because there were screens above and below on those.

Brokaw: So the museum could get some air into it, I assume.

Adams: That's correct.

Brokaw: Yes. What do you think about the museum now, Hope Abbey—excuse me, not museum, mausoleum, which is Hope Abbey. We should refer it as Hope Abbey. What do you think about how it looks now?

Adams: Oh, I think they've done a beautiful job. Part of the problem, to begin with, was because the hill was so full of springs that water had leaked in and that's what ruined the floors, and was creating the problem, but the men had been—the Lodge had been working on that situation, and had actually—one of our men had access to a Caterpillar tractor and he was a Caterpillar mechanic. And he'd bring things up that needed to be worked on, quote unquote. And he actually installed tile around the building, and we got rid of some of the water problems to begin with. It's been worked on again, so it's pretty successful now. But it was a longtime project and, of course, all those drainages on the top of the building had been plugged with dirt and cans from somebody's party on the roof. And so all those had to be cleaned out and that's what created a lot of the problems within the building.

Brokaw: So, they have French, probably French drains all around the building now.

Adams: Well, they are different—completely tiled around it now, I think. And they managed to get more little springs going some other direction, I don't know how that happened. It's been fairly successful so far anyway.

Brokaw: Yeah, if someone's not familiar with the Eugene South Hills, springs just pop up everywhere when it rains. You've already mentioned this, but maybe you can go into more detail, do you have memories of the condition of the cemetery in the 1990's or earlier, and what can you tell us about those earlier days?

Adams: Well, a lot of the stones [grave stones] that were—I thought about it this morning. A lot of the stones that were destroyed were not destroyed by people, but by the forest that was within the cemetery. Old broken limbs would come down and crash. The problem was that with a lot of them was that the smaller stones, where the people had been sold a bill of goods, that [the grave stones] were Oregon marble. What they were was sandstone, and the tree limbs broke a lot of them. The one just north of Whiteaker's, for instance, that lot right there was completely wrecked by a windstorm. There were a lot of little oak trees in there and the limbs broke off and broke all those stones. The man who owned that lot was actually pretty well off, but he was a very, I don't know what term I want, miserly, about the stones. And that's what they all were, they were little stones. And the limbs just shattered them, completely shattered them.

Brokaw: Do you know if those stones have been restored recently?

Adams: No, that one never has, I don't think. And I'm not sure they could because— the records show who's buried there, but I can't remember the name. I haven't got peoples' names in front of me. But I wish I did, but I know that that's what happened with that lot because I helped clean it up.

Brokaw: You've talked about Hope Abbey and the condition of Hope Abbey. That's interesting because I think most people believe that the stones were whacked by people (laughs), or what do I want to say, broken by people. But—

Adams: (Garbled) when Richard Roblyer, who had been with the DeMolay boys to begin with, and he went to the service and came back, and he went to work with my husband in the cemetery with the boys. He was actually by trade a stonemason and they replaced one memorial area. I can't remember what year it was, but we went through the cemetery and they were replacing all the stones that had been either by vandalism, or otherwise by weather, been damaged. They reset stones all over the place. And, there was, close up near the top of the hill, there's a path that leads down over the north side.

Well, a bunch of hippie types lived down on the end of the street, that whole street was inhabited by them. They'd come up there and they did a lot of vandalism to the cemetery and pushed over some of the bigger stones and stole some of the pieces, which sometimes you could recover and sometimes you couldn't. But they [Roblyer, Murray Adams, DeMolay] reset four stones up there at the top of the hill next to that path. They reset three times that same day, [and] before they would be able to be "set," this group would come up and push them over. We had a gay time that time. (laughs)

Brokaw: Oh boy, that's maddening. Let's go on to another question. At the time you served on the board, did you think the cemetery should be rehabilitated with an emphasis on plants and trees somewhat like a botanic garden or arboretum? Or the emphasis on headstones and the cemetery's history? Or were you—

Adams: Well, actually I was on the latter. I was not necessarily open garden situation to what we have, but I was in the minority on that situation, so I mostly kept my mouth shut because it wasn't going to do any good to talk.

Brokaw: Because you preferred to save the stones and—

Adams: Well, I didn't mean that it had to be like, it didn't need to look like Resthaven [a lawn cemetery], but it could have been, but I wasn't entirely for the situation, just leaving it to grow until the flowers grew, as much as I love the flowers.

Brokaw: Yes. I think that now, twenty-five years later, we're coming into that balance.

Adams: Yeah.

Brokaw: Did you organize or were you part of events to introduce people to the cemetery?

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Adams: I was never very good at that sort of thing. I just kind of went along with— Kay Holbo was the one who deserves all the credit for all this.

Brokaw: But you said you did organize some events. I'd heard there was an ice cream social.

Adams: Well, I didn't necessarily organize it, but when they'd say they're going to do it, I took care of it. I wasn't originally the chairman or that sort of thing, and nobody wanted to handle food and coffee and that sort of thing, so that was usually my job.

Brokaw: Okay, all right. That's a big job.

Thornhill: Oh, and I have something to add. So earlier you had said you had all the equipment. I was wondering if you could tell us more about what equipment was that?

Adams: Oh, there were coffee pots, and the stuff was all stored in the shed after it was built, so we had a place to keep them. Other than that, they were in my garage. But there were coffee pots and plates and the things you need to serve, like cups and saucers and that sort of thing, because I had access to those sorts of things from other organizations that I belonged to.

Brokaw: Okay. Other than your family connections to the cemetery, what are you drawn to the most in the cemetery and Hope Abbey? In other words, if you didn't have family there, what would you find—

Adams: Well, even before I had family there, we always loved the place. It's open and the trees and the birds and squirrels and whatever.

Brokaw: And they had paths.

Adams: Right.

Brokaw: All right.

Thornhill: I am curious to know about the time period between when the cemetery was being maintained and then there was a period where it starting having a lot of overgrowth. In a previous interview someone had mentioned that there was literally an abandoned car covered with ivy and so I was wondering if you could share with us what happened between that time period between the '50s and the '90s.

Adams: Well, I don't know about an abandoned car. I don't remember ever seeing or even hearing about the car, that was somewhere, not my—

But there was one that—where those roads were all open, the gates were not—we didn't have the gates. Kids would come up there and try out their cars on those back roads. And one of them went off and went down into a grave that had been

where someone had been removed up to Resthaven. And they were screaming bloody murder that it was our fault that he was down there in that grave. Too bad it wasn't. (laughs)

Thornhill: Just to recap, someone drove their car into a grave?

Adams: Well, it went off the road and went down in—it was over on the backside towards twenty-fifth towards that corner that was cut off. He lost control of the car and ended up down in one of those graves that had been opened.

Brokaw: And the cemetery was supposedly to blame for that?

Adams: Well, according to the guy who was driving the car, it was.

Brokaw: (laughs)

Adams: He was trying to get us to pay for the wrecker to haul him out. (laughs)

Brokaw: I hope we didn't.

Adams: No, we didn't.

Brokaw: You have mentioned Resthaven a number of times. And I wanted to say that that is Resthaven Memorial Gardens, which is a lawn cemetery.

Adams: That's correct.

Brokaw: Okay. About how much time did you spend per month on board business or working in the cemetery? The combination of those two.

Adams: I have no idea. It was whatever we could do.

Brokaw: All right, but I'd say probably a fair amount.

Adams: I would say a fair amount. Yes. My husband and my kids were there more than I was.

Brokaw: (Indistinct chattering) What did she say? [Alice's daughter, Carolyn Adams is talking to Alice]

Adams: The boys. Not the girls. (laughs)

Brokaw: Looking to the future, are you hopeful or confident that the cemetery can survive or better yet thrive in the next ten years or even a hundred years or more? What do you think is needed for long term success?

Adams: Well, I think we're on the right track. And I have no—I can't give you a decent answer on that because I'm not—but, if we keep going the way we are, I think we could make it.

Brokaw: We're headed in the right direction?

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- Adams: I think we're headed in the right direction.
- Thornhill: Oh, and I have a question too. So, with the heading in the right direction, I was wondering if you could— So being a founding board member, we've heard a lot about meetings that would happen, where all the volunteer board members would come together. I was wondering if you could share a memory about some of the board meetings. We've heard that they happened at, they would usually happen at people's homes?
- Adams: No, we usually— One of the men belonged to a church that we had access to their meeting room. So, we always met in the church. We called that our "neutral territory."
- Thornhill: What Church was that?
- Adams: Well, it's the one on twenty-fifth. What's the one on 25th? Up there on 22nd, off—
- Brokaw: Oh, the Congregational?
- Adams: 22nd and Harris.
- Brokaw: I think that's the Congregational church.
- Adams: No, it's not Congregational. I don't think.
- Brokaw: No?
- Adams: Anyway, at least it wasn't then. But one of the men belonged to that church and that's where we met almost all the time.
- Thornhill: And what—
- Adams: We never met in anybody's home. Unless it was a party.
- Thornhill: And what—
- Adams: Like a Christmas party or something.
- Thornhill: And what were those board meetings like?
- Adams: I would say they were pretty well controlled and pretty intelligent for the most part. Nobody ever got off on wild arguments or territories. Nobody ever got any wild ideas about anything.
- Brokaw: How long were you on the board, Alice?
- Adams: From the beginning until 2011.
- Brokaw: So, about twenty years then. [Note: 17 years, from 1994 to 2011 including meetings before the EMCA was established in 1995]
- Adams: 'Cause 2011 was when I moved up here with my daughter [to Washington state].

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Brokaw: What were some of the bumps in the road that were challenges and what are some of your best memories of being on the board?

Adams: I think challenges were always money, it was always finding a way to finance things, because that's always been our biggest problem.

(Indistinct chattering between Alice and Carolyn) Yeah, Church of Christ. First United. What? (indistinct chattering)

Brokaw: First Congregational United Church of Christ is where you met? [for board meetings—Alice's daughter, Carolyn, found the church name]

Adams: Yeah. That's about 22nd and Harris.

Brokaw: Yes. So, the challenges, the largest challenge was money. And what were, what are, some of your best memories of being on the board?

Adams: The friendships that we developed with each other. We worked well together with a goal. And Kay was wonderful at finding people who were interested in this sort of thing. We had a lot of communication with the historical society and they were fabulous. And the people were fabulous and we made good friends.

Brokaw: That's good.

Adams: And that's what made the difference.

Thornhill: And who were some of those people?

Adams: You're asking me names. And I'm terrible—

Thornhill: Oh, that's okay. That's no problem.

Adams: You'd have to look them up. I'm terrible at names. I can see their faces and I know exactly who they are.

Brokaw: That's fine. Is there anything else that you'd like to add? Or do you have any stories that you'd like to tell?

Adams: One of those stories of cleaning up the area that we referred to as the "meadow" over in the southeast corner, well most of that has become part of the Jewish area. But there was one area in there that took up about four different lots or parts of four different lots, so it was a pretty huge area. That was a great huge blackberry patch, supposedly. And Richard Roblyer took the boys and they worked with axes, and they worked with— and finally gave it a shot of DDT [ed note: probably 2,4-D]. And well, that was when it was still legal, and killed those blackberry vines. And what they found was, actually it was a ring of blackberry vines and in the middle was a big marijuana patch.

And how they got in to take care of [the marijuana], I have no idea. Of course, it didn't have any problem with water because of the springs in the hill. And anyway, it was well destroyed, and the city came up and hauled it all off and took it down to their incinerator down at EWEB [Eugene Water and Electric Board].

Brokaw: About when was this?

Adams: This would have been, probably in the '60s. And there were other marijuana patches here and there in the place too. And they managed to get rid of most of those.

Brokaw: And now it's legal.

Adams: Yeah, but not to grow in the cemetery.

Brokaw: That's for sure! That's a good story. I haven't heard of that one. Well, do have any other questions, Kate?

Thornhill: Yeah, I have one related to food because you were the main prepper for bringing all the food to all the parties and the events—

Adams: Well, I didn't bring it all. It was usually a volunteer situation. And actually, the cakes that we would get for Memorial Day—there's a bakery class at South Eugene. And they would make the cakes and decorate them. And some of them were just really cute. And we'd have cake and coffee and juice and some cookies for the kids.

Brokaw: And that's South Eugene High School.

Adams: Yes.

Brokaw: Their cooking program there.

Adams: Right.

Thornhill: Oh, that's really cool.

Adams: It was pretty cool.

Thornhill: That's really cool. What's been one of your most favorite events that happened at the cemetery?

Adams: Favorite events?

Thornhill: Yeah. Like—

Adams: We sometimes had a picnic clear at the top [top of the hill—Public Square]. And that was for anybody that wanted to come, and that was fun. And then when they started the music programs at the Mausoleum, that was great.

Thornhill: Is that the *Music to Die For* program?

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- Adams: Right.
- Brokaw: What time of the year did you have your picnics? Was it in the hot summer or more spring?
- Adams: No, it usually had to do with Memorial Day. Although, I'm not sure about one of them. I can't remember— It was an event that had to do with the Skinners [Eugene and Mary Skinner, founders of Eugene, Oregon]. I can't remember for sure, that was too long ago. I know we had a big picnic up there. And it was lots of fun.
- Brokaw: I think, if I remember, someone impersonated Eugene Skinner. Wasn't that— [ed note: it was William Sullivan]
- Adams: They did. Yeah, you remember correctly.
- Thornhill: And when did this happen, when was this event? Or was that a regular occurrence?
- Adams: (Indistinct chattering) Yeah, Carolyn says September 13. It was his (Skinner's) birthday so it could have been in that time. [Note: see EMCA's Fall 2009 edition of the *Monumental News* newsletter on the EMCA website for more information about the event.]
- Adams: It was a big potluck and we had to spread all over the place up there.
- Thornhill: How many people do you think had shown up to the potluck?
- Adams: Oh gosh. We must have had—we almost had two hundred people. There were lots of people and lots of food.
- Thornhill: Wow.
- Adams: And it was fun.
- Thornhill: Was this in the '60s or '70s? or '80s? or '90s?
- Adams: Um, it must have been in the '80s, probably. I'm guessing, but— And I'm sure, it's in the Minutes some place if you want to go back and look. [Note: it was in Sept. 2009.]
- Brokaw: Well, this was up in the public square. Am I correct?
- Adams: Correct. That's what the public square was for, actually.
- Brokaw: The thing is, everybody had to carry everything up there. All the food up to the top of the hill—
- Adams: Well, we hauled it up in a truck. And then we got the cars out of there.

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Brokaw: Sounds like a lot of fun. If you don't have anything else to add, I'll thank you much for the interview.

Carolyn: [Alice's daughter speaking] I'd like to tell you a story.

Brokaw: Okay. This is, by the way, Carolyn Alice Adams. Am I correct?

Carolyn: That's correct.

Thornhill: And Carolyn, do we have your permission to record you as part of the interview?

Carolyn: It doesn't matter. I'm going to tell you about the day we buried my dad.

Brokaw: Okay. So that's a yes?

Thornhill: Is that a yes?

Carolyn: Yes. It's okay.

Thornhill: Thank you.

Carolyn: The family got together, and we had permission to bury my dad because he was cremated and he was put in a box with a Masonic emblem and given to us by the, what was it? Not Lounsbury—

Adams: Lounsbury.

Carolyn: It was Lounsbury's Funeral Home at the time. And, anyway, the family got together and we had a little service of interment. And the grandkids all wanted to help dig the hole and we had to use a pickaxe because it was pretty hard to dig it up. And my nephews were young, they were like four or five. They were out scattering around. And up above to the left— Anyway, there was a stone that had been toppled over. And there was a base there that was hollow, and a squirrel had gotten in there and couldn't get out and died. So, my nephews came up to me and said "Auntie Carolyn! Auntie Carolyn! You wanna see the squirrel? You wanna see the squirrel?" I didn't really, but I went up and we had a little ceremony for the dead squirrel as well as for my dad that day. (laughs)

Brokaw: Oh, that's a cute one! (laughs)

Thornhill: And may I ask, what year was this?

Adams: That would have been 1941. No, that would have been 1970.

Thornhill: 1970?

Carolyn: That's when dad died. Dad died in 1970.

Adams: Dad died in 1990.

Carolyn: Oh, sorry, 1990.

Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association Alice Adams Interview

Thornhill: 1990.

Carolyn: It's on his stone.

Adams: My name's on the stone too, so—

Brokaw: Well, thank you so much. And thank you Carolyn too.

End of Interview

Addendum 1.

Dear Alex

2/9/22

This never came up, but I think it necessary to explain some of this.

In 1856, the city council of Eugene City wrote a letter to Eugene Lodge #11, stating that other places in the country had sponsored the establishing of "burying grounds". Would Eugene Lodge consider doing this? Of course they did. The final payment for the property, which, of course, was useless for farming purposes, wasn't paid until after the gentleman, who is buried at the top of the hill, (my 96 year old mind can't remember all the proper names) had died. Money was short.

At the time, the cemetery was 3 miles from downtown. Eventually, that is why the street car line ended at the foot of the cemetery. There was a turnaround where the corner is cut off at the Northeast corner of the property. Some of the track is still in University Street.

The public square at the top of the cemetery was used for group picnics when families came to take care of the graves. Since Memorial Day was not established yet, this was usually done in early summer when there were lots of flowers and before summer harvest.

This letter is either [sic] in archives of Eugene #11. I think I made a copy for EMCA files.

There are several Chinese burials in the cemetery. They were workers for the railroad, but also some had a laundry behind where the Eugene Hotel is located. The lots were owned by Luckey (I don't remember his first name—it's in the books) a member of the Lodge. The Chinese would come at night and tell of the passing of their deceased, then take the body to the cemetery before dawn. I don't know that I ever heard why it was done this way. I only know of one location, Gee Dean Luckey, but there are more.

(Of course it helped that the City Council at the time had several members of the Lodge)

Sorry about this rambling account, but some of it should be added. The questions I was asked did not allow for any of this, but it helps to tell the story.

Miss you all. Alice

Addendum 2.

Sent by Carolyn Adams (Alice's daughter) June 19, 2021

Alice Amata (Prather) Adams Age 95

Just want to correct something I think Kate said, the Prathers settled in Buena Vista, Oregon. Pronounced "Buna" with long "u".

My dad, Murray Adams, was active in Eugene Lodge No. 11, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, and he had a long-time association with the cemetery. The Demolay boys of Eugene Chapter, Order of the Demolay were sponsored by Scottish Rite (but the people working with them were all from Eugene Lodge).

When I went on vacation, I would take pictures of various cemeteries and send them to dad. It just used to be our "thing." Mom's dad was on the board at the Buena Vista Cemetery where many of our relatives are buried.

Many of mom's relatives were buried in family cemetery in what became Camp Adair in WW II. The cemetery was moved to Monmouth, OR at that time.

Mom got involved with dad when City Renewal forced the Lodge to vacate their building. That is a whole other story. It was when they located old minute books and cemetery records that mom took a real interest. The history is what fascinated her.