

“Bodies of Work II: Art in the Cemetery”

It's been six years since the Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association (EMCA) held an art show, so it's our pleasure to again mount an exhibit in Hope Abbey during Memorial Day weekend. We are featuring six local artists with the theme “Bodies of Work II: Art in the Cemetery.” All art in the exhibit will be available for purchase.

Five painters, Patti McNutt, Suma Elan, Margaret Plumb, John Holdway, and Tara Kemp along with sculptor Helen Kaufman, will have their work displayed in Hope Abbey. Some artists will also be creating their work in the Plein Air painting style (weather permitting) throughout the cemetery. “En plein air” is a French expression meaning “in the open air,” and refers to the act of painting outdoors with the artist's subject in full view.

Hallis, EMCA board member, painter, and “Bodies of Work II” coordinator, has also created a self-guided walking tour brochure of outstanding grave marker art. “The Dying Art of Stone Carving” brochure will enable cemetery visitors to find excellent examples of



“Daffies” by Patti McNutt

grave marker art.

Traditional displays and events will also occur during the weekend. Barry Barreau will again play taps in the Public Square, and an American flag will fly over each veteran's grave.

A “Cemetery Highlights” guided tour will take place on Sunday, led by board member Caroline Forell. On Memorial Day, Landscape Manager Diego Llewellyn-Jones will lead a tour featur-

ing the cemetery's remarkable landscape. Tours will begin at Hope Abbey Mausoleum at 12:30.

Two history hunts (similar to scavenger hunts), titled “Tombstone Tales,” and “Find the Veterans,” for children and families will be on-going throughout the weekend, with prizes awarded for those completing a hunt. The last history hunt each day starts at 4:00 p.m. since we close at 5:00.

“Before” and “After” pictures providing visual evidence of the progress EMCA has made in improving the appearance and condition of the cemetery will be displayed in Hope Abbey.

Cake and coffee will be served each day. The cakes will again be prepared by Reality Kitchen, a nonprofit bakery and café in Eugene (see realitykitchen.org for information about this inspiring organization).

Cemetery gates will be open from 11:30 to 5:00 p.m. All events are free and open to the public.

Alex Brokaw, Board Member



“Landscape” by John Holdway

Memorial Day Weekend Events

Sunday, May 28

- 12:15 - Taps** will be played on the Public Square.
- 12:30 - Cemetery Highlights tour** (meet in front of Hope Abbey).
- 6:00 p.m. Blugene Brass concert** featuring singer Shirley Andress, in the Public Square.

Monday, May 29

- 12:15 - Taps** will be played on the Public Square.
- 12:30 - Landscape tour** (meet in front of Hope Abbey).

Meet Our New Groundskeeper

We are happy to welcome the newest member of our landscape team, Jackson Kopka. Jackson grew up in northern Michigan and graduated from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, with a degree in Environmental Science and Sustainable Food Systems.

After college, he embarked on a road trip to the Pacific Northwest. Having spent all of his life in the Midwest, he was captivated by what he saw and experienced here. Although he visited the coast and Portland, his journey took him east through Bend, so he never visited Eugene.

When he decided to move to the Northwest, he applied to, and was hired by Upriver Organics, an organic farm based in Walterville. After five years farming, he decided to take a break and return to Michigan during the pandemic. After a year there, he realized his heart was in Oregon, and returned to the Eugene area.

Luckily for the cemetery, Jackson saw Diego's ad for a landscaper (on social media—the way to go these days) and was hired. His job with the cemetery is only part time, so he fills in his other days working at local farms.

In his free time, Jackson likes to play chess, hike and soak up life through community, food and art. He also writes poetry and paints. Look for some of his poetry



Landscape Manager Diego Llewellyn-Jones (left) with groundskeeper Jackson Kopka

in future newsletters!

When asked what he enjoys about working in the cemetery, Jackson said he likes working with his hands and outside, but he especially likes working in a space where people want to visit. He likes the intentional work of the cemetery and the intellectual aspect. What touched me was his comment, "This place feeds my soul." We are fortunate to have Jackson join our landscape team.

Betsy Halpern, Volunteer

What Do Board Members Do all Day?

The EMCA Board of Directors is pleased to introduce our newest board member, Beatrice McKenzie. Beatrice lived in Eugene and studied at the University of Oregon for several years in the early 2000s. Her children attended school in South Eugene during this time, so Beatrice and her husband, Russell Read, got to know and love the community. She remembers taking walks in the cemetery, and her children participated in at least one Memorial Day scavenger hunt. She earned her Ph.D. in History in 2006. The family then moved to Beloit,



Beatrice McKenzie

Wisconsin, where Beatrice was a beloved history professor until her retirement in 2021.

Beatrice comes from a large, close-knit Irish-American family. She is one of nine children. Her childhood was spent in Beverly, a South Side neighborhood of Chicago. Several of her siblings now live in the Eugene-Springfield area, as they moved here during the years that Beatrice was completing her studies. After retirement, Beatrice and her husband wanted to live closer to family.

continued on page 3

Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association

(541) 684-0949

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The IRS Form 990 is available for inspection upon request.

www.eugenemasoniccemetery.org

We acknowledge that the cemetery stands on land formerly inhabited by the Kalapuya tribe. We honor the care they provided for the land.

From the President

This is my final “From the President” column. My four years will conclude with the election of a new Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association (EMCA) president this month. It is fitting that two other articles in this publication address what matters most to me about the Eugene Masonic Cemetery. One article describes the origins of placing stones on markers—placing stones on my mother’s marker in the cemetery is how I honor her. Charley’s article on our endowments highlights why we need your help to preserve this extraordinary place that EMCA has worked tirelessly to restore.

When my mother died in 2012, my family chose to have some of her ashes buried in the cemetery and we installed a marker. I know she isn’t physically under that marker, but it is where my family

and I can go to remember her. We do this by putting heart-shaped stones on her marker. We find these stones all over the country and the world. This practice represents my mother to a “T”— full of heart and always traveling. To have a beautiful place to come to and feel her spirit means so much to me. Seeing the hearts accumulate fills me with pride and gratitude.

Gratitude leads me to what else matters. I want the cemetery to remain a magnificent natural, cultural and historic space forever. As Charley notes in his article, the income from selling casket burial rights will end soon. To keep the cemetery and Hope Abbey looking lovely, we need another source of income.



Caroline Forell

The most obvious source is a larger endowment that will provide the necessary income stream in perpetuity. To that end, I have given a house to the Oregon Community Foundation, which sold it to create the “Starlight Fund,” an endowment for the EMCA.

Of course, I don’t expect you to do the same (although we’d be most grateful if you did). Helping us build our endowment in whatever way you can will make our \$2.5 million EMCA endowment goal a reality. On that note, I sign off as president with the belief that with your assistance this amazing space will continue to be well cared for in the future.

— Caroline Forell, Board President



Board Member, Beatrice McKenzie, from page 2

They were also delighted to return to the community that they had grown to love while Beatrice was a student.

Beatrice has done work to serve others all her life, starting with a two year stint in the Peace Corps in Burkina Faso, West Africa, where she taught English. She later worked as a Foreign Service Officer for the U.S. State Department in Cape Verde, Hong Kong, and Uganda. Her areas of expertise in U.S. History are immigration, citizenship, race and gender. A published author, she

is currently writing a book about an Italian family that immigrated in the early 20th century to Pullman, a model industrial town, now a defined community area in Chicago.

As a historian, writer, and volunteer, Beatrice feels she will be able to contribute a great deal to the Eugene Masonic Cemetery’s role as a cultural resource for our community. She has a passion for archives and will help us expand the interpretive history of this place.

Catherine Kordesch, Board Member

Photos Wanted

Sally Dietrich, EMCA administrator, has become aware of the lack of photos of the cemetery. She, and those working on marker restoration, are particularly interested in turn of the century photos, although any old photos are welcome. If you have any, you may contact Sally at emca1859@gmail.com.



Our Arboretum: Preserving a Priceless Community Asset

Earlier this year, the Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association (EMCA) worked with a contractor to safely fell a very large Douglas fir tree located near the eastern edge of the cemetery. The tree was at the end of its life and, if left standing, could become a hazard. The potential hazard zone included a neighbor's house, a fence, dozens of grave markers and a well-traveled pathway.

Bringing down the massive tree was no easy task. Simply taking a chainsaw to the trunk and letting it fall would have undoubtedly caused destruction—no matter in which direction it fell.

The expert arborists scaled the tree and set up a sophisticated rigging system. The tree was then cut into 20 to 30-foot sections. Due to

the rigging, once a cut was completed, the massive section, weighing hundreds of pounds, was lowered safely so as not to damage the grave markers or other property below. In the days and weeks that followed, the large sections were then cut into more manageable pieces and hauled away.

I brought my two children (ages 8 and 3) to see the once-stalwart tree lying in sections on the forest floor. My kids inspected the downed tree and counted approximately 130 rings. We talked about what those rings represent. We also talked about what the cemetery and the surrounding community were like 130 years ago and how the tree had provided a habitat for countless creatures. During that discussion I was struck with an

overwhelming feeling of gratitude for the tree and for the surrounding forest overlying the Eugene Masonic Cemetery. Indeed, a big reason why the cemetery is such a special and sacred place is due to its setting within a thriving forest.

Our hope is that these magnificent trees will continue to oversee the cemetery for generations to come. Part of the EMCA's mission is to restore, rehabilitate, maintain, interpret and operate the cemetery as a natural resource for the community. In furtherance of that mission, the EMCA sought to accredit the cemetery as an arboretum.

In August 2022, we became an accredited arboretum through ArbNet, an international network of tree-focused professionals. Since August, we have worked to catalogue and inventory the hundreds of trees in the cemetery. This information will help us provide educational information for visitors, and monitor the health and needs of the various species of trees and plants located in the cemetery. We are working with staff, volunteers and professionals to ensure the diverse plant life in the cemetery is being protected against climate change. We are also busy developing arboretum-specific resources for the community to enjoy and are looking forward to making these resources available in the weeks and months to come.

After my children and I inspected the fallen tree and talked about the awesome forest, my son commented how it is neat that we get to remember the dead in a place that is so full of life. I couldn't agree more. Our hope is that the Arboretum at the Eugene Masonic Cemetery will ensure that the forest and life in the cemetery continue to flourish for generations to come.

Shawn Walker, Board Member



Cemetery Stones

If you spend much time in a cemetery, you're bound to see stones left on graves. You might also notice that they are usually left on Jewish graves, but it is not strictly a Jewish tradition.

For thousands of years, people were buried in tombs or directly in the earth. Stones were then rolled in front of a tomb as a way of sealing it from scavengers and keeping evil spirits from escaping out into the world. For those buried in the ground, rocks and stones were placed on top of the shallow grave to keep animals from digging up the body.

Eastern European folklore included the belief that the dead could haunt their burial places or return to their families to cause trouble. Stones and rocks were used to prevent the deceased one from rising up and escaping the body as a spirit, to torment others.

It is a Jewish tradition to place a stone or a pebble on a headstone.

Although the origin of this custom is uncertain, leaving a stone on the headstone indicates that you have visited the grave. Adding a stone is also seen as taking part in the Mitzvah of Matzevah, or the "setting of stone."

Many consider stones to be a symbol of our departed loved ones' enduring presence in our lives. This belief claims a stone represents our memory of them and their legacy, and how they live on in us. Flowers may be pretty, but not for very long. They will eventually wilt and die, but a stone lasts forever, as does love.

Today, leaving a stone of remembrance is viewed as a way of continuing this tradition of commemoration. A person who sees stones on a loved one's grave often finds this comforting. These stones are reminders that someone they loved was visited, mourned for, and honored by others who visited the grave. The more stones found at a

grave, the more the deceased has been visited and remembered by others.

Information from A Grave Interest blog



Music at the Cemetery

Music at the cemetery is back! A full schedule of *Music To Die For* concerts is already lined up. In addition, after the success of a couple of outdoor concerts last year, a full season of *Music on the Square* has been scheduled for this coming summer.

Music To Die For concerts are on

To Our Readers

If you would like to receive EMCA's monthly eNewsletter, go to the EMCA's website.

On the pull down menu, click **About Us** and then **EMCA publications**. **Sign up at www.eugenemasoniccemetery.org**

the second Sunday of the month, June through October, starting at 2:00 p.m. They are held in Hope Abbey and last about an hour. Note the date change from previous years.

- **June 11:** Linda Danielson, fiddle and Janet Naylor, Celtic harp
- **July 9:** Clefs of Insanity, an a cappella ensemble
- **August 13:** David Gross, guitar and vocal plus a guest
- **September 10:** horn, tenor, violin and piano
- **October 15:** The Ineffable Bassoon Trio (enough said)

The outdoor concerts are held in the Public Square at the top of the hill and thus are called *Music on the*

Square. Five concerts are scheduled, most, but not all, on the first Sunday of the month. These concerts begin at 6 p.m.

- **May 28:** Memorial Day—Blugene Brass with Shirley Andress, vocalist
- **June 4:** Oregon Brass Society
- **July 2:** Swing Shift
- **August 6:** Kef Balkan Band
- **September 24:** Blugene Brass

As always, these concerts are free. Donations are welcomed and are used for cemetery maintenance.

Be sure to put these dates on your calendars now and join others for wonderful concerts in the Eugene Masonic Cemetery.

Over My Dead Body

Unearthing the Hidden History of America's Cemeteries
by Greg Melville (2022)

Over My Dead Body describes Melville's visits to an eclectic variety of cemeteries including Burial Hill, an early burial ground in Plymouth, Massachusetts, where some Mayflower folks are buried. He covers the nineteenth-century rise of rural cemeteries like the Eugene Masonic Cemetery, and the twentieth-century movement to lawn cemeteries filled with expensive coffins encasing embalmed bodies. Melville ends with Nature's Sanctuary, established in 2018 in West Laurel Hill Cemetery, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Considered America's greenest natural burial site, it represents the renewed interest in more natural settings and burial practices.

Melville's descriptions helped me create my bucket list of cemeteries to visit.

First, I must visit Mt. Auburn, the first rural-style cemetery, established in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1831. The design of the Eugene Masonic Cemetery was inspired by this style. According to Melville, Mt. Auburn is the "birthplace of landscape architecture" and America's first public park. It also represents the transition from graveyards to cemeteries by separating interment from houses of worship.

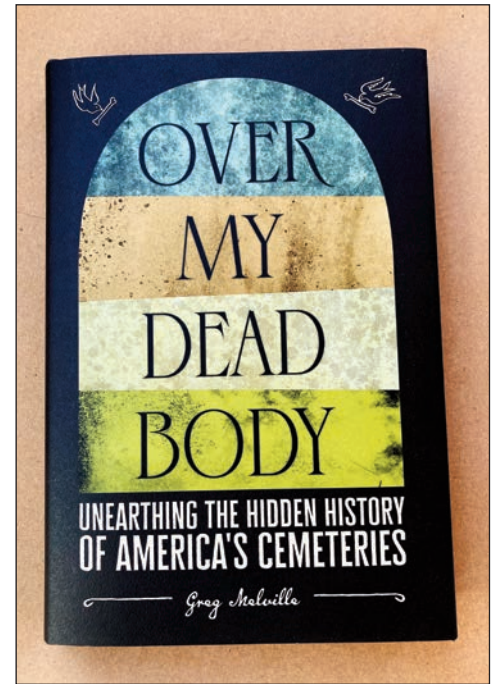
Next, I want to tour Green-Wood,

established in Brooklyn, New York, in 1838. It was New York City's first major public art museum, filled with many sculptures. Its trees, meandering paths, and local history remind me, on a grand scale, of our cemetery. Like us, Green-Wood fell into neglect and was brought back to life, partly by inviting the public to musical events.

Third on my list is Sleepy Hollow, established in 1855 in Bedford, Massachusetts. Before it became a graveyard, it was a popular wooded refuge for local writers. Establishing it as a cemetery protected its natural habitat, and it became the country's first protected natural space. Emerson, Alcott, Hawthorne and Thoreau loved its wild beauty and are all buried there.

The spreading of cremains is featured in my next "must visit" place, Central Park in New York City. Spreading human ashes is legal in NYC public parks. After John Lennon was murdered in front of his residence, The Dakota, in 1980, Yoko Ono reportedly spread his ashes across the street in Central Park. Today the park includes a Beatles Strawberry Fields memorial including an "IMAGINE" mosaic.

The final site on my bucket list is closer to home. Chapel of Chimes columbarium in Oakland, Califor-



nia, was designed by Julia Morgan, who also designed Hearst Castle. It is possibly America's largest indoor cemetery, with urns cleverly made to look like books on bookshelves. The columbarium as a library of the dead is an intriguing idea.

Melville notes that "nearly every cemetery has a superpower—whether it's the location, history, view, occupants, architecture or something else." His book makes me treasure the Eugene Masonic Cemetery even more because of its many superpowers. Among them are its landscape, history, architecture and music in a park-like refuge for the living and the dead. Unlike the cemeteries Melville describes, we also offer 46 biographical signs that tell the histories of noteworthy residents.

I recommend *Over My Dead Body* to anyone who loves good stories and history. And I recommend visiting the Eugene Masonic Cemetery, a cemetery loaded with superpowers.

Caroline Forell, Board President

Consider your place in history...

The Eugene Masonic Cemetery has burial rights to sell. We can accommodate cremated remains and caskets. Your purchase provides a beautiful and meaningful place for your family to visit and helps support the cemetery.

For more information, please contact Sally at 541-684-0949 or emca1859@gmail.com.



Recent Contributions

The following individuals and organizations contributed gifts between October 1, 2022 and April 1, 2023. We thank you all.

Monumental Giver (\$2,500+)

Rowell Brokaw Architects
William and Christina Bradshaw
Ruth Nill
Charles and Leslie Wright

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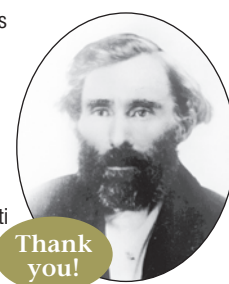
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Carla Campbell and Greg Vantuyle



Gifts in Honor and in Memory

Between October 1, 2022 and April 1, 2023, the Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association received gifts from the following. We wish to thank all who contributed and regret any errors or omissions.

Monumental Giver (\$2,500+)

A-J Roslyn Gaines Foundation in memory of Carolyn Spector
Larson Family Foundation for the Landscape Endowment
Don Peting in memory of Betty Peting, for use on restoration projects

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

Bob and Alex Brokaw in memory of Barbara and Harold Butler and Olivia Helene Brokaw
Kenneth Currens in memory of Gerald E. Currens and Beth Currens Westcott
Brigid Flannery for the Landscape Endowment and in memory of Roz Slovic
Caroline Forell in memory of Judy Forell

Diana Gardener for the Landscape Endowment
Carol Houde in honor of Karen Seidel
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Carol and Samuel Williams in memory of the Luckeys and the Leasures and for the McClanahan restoration
David Zimmerman in memory of Paul A. Davis

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Warren Wong in memory of Bella and Oliver

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Christina Armstrong in memory of Byron and Justine Buck
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Dorothea Yellott in memory of Martha Dorman, Geary Smith and Arthur M. Geary

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Lisa Arkin in memory of Flora Codman
Dwight and Barbara Beattie in memory of W.G. Beattie and Willamette Beattie
Lorraine Bias in memory of Jerome Bias
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Carol Garringer in memory of Jerry Garringer
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Helmut Plant in memory of Carol Hamrick Plant
Ginny Reich in memory of Robert and Opal Clark and Laurie Guttormsen
Eric and Kelli Rosen in memory of Eileen Binenkorb
Robert B. Stein in memory of Ben and Lee Stein
Cornelia Taggart in memory of Bob Dritz
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Recent In-kind Contributions

We happily acknowledge the in-kind services and discounts afforded to us by the following.

Dale Forrest
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If you wish to donate, please use the enclosed remittance envelope or PayPal.



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*Newsletter by Betsy Halpern
and Beneda Design*

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Endowment Campaign Kicks Off

The Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association (EMCA) has started a campaign to increase its endowment to \$2.5 million. Although the cemetery has never looked better, the grounds are officially recognized as an arboretum, and Hope Abbey is essentially restored, success has caused a problem.

Since taking over in 1995, the EMCA has relied heavily on income from operating the cemetery as a nonprofit business, selling burial rights. As a result, almost no sites are left now for casket burials. Options for accepting cremated remains will continue, but about \$100,000 a year in burial income will end soon.

The best way to replace the lost income and continue to preserve and enhance this community treasure is to build a larger endowment. The EMCA has endowments now, managed by the Oregon Community Foundation, and already worth well over a million

dollars, so adding enough to those funds to offset the drop in operating income is a realistic goal.

In order to campaign effectively, the board wants to understand what the community finds most important about the cemetery.



- What does it provide of special value?
- How can we work together to support those features and leave a lasting legacy for future generations?

To let us know your views, or to learn more about the endowment campaign, please write to:

Caroline Forell, PO Box 5934,
Eugene, OR 97405 or send an email to
cforell@uoregon.edu.

If you've already included the EMCA in your planned giving, we'd certainly like to know about that, too.

Charles Wright, Board Member