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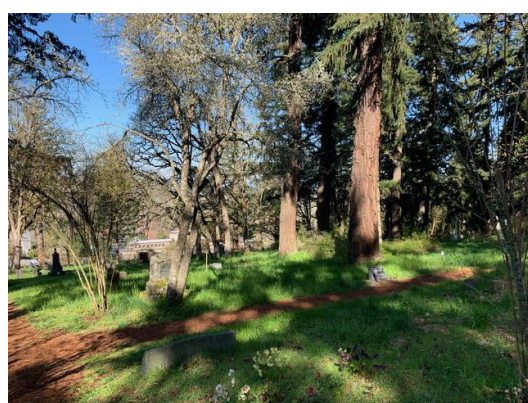


April, 2020

Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association eNewsletter



Notes About the Cemetery in this time of COVID-19



The cemetery is green and lush as we head into May. Spring flowers are everywhere, and the grass is barely under control. It is beautiful. A pair of red shoulder hawks have been spotted nesting somewhere up by the Memorial Overlook. I'm not sure the other birds and critters are too pleased about that, but we are.

We continue to be open for visitors during the daylight hours, but are requiring social distancing and prohibit groups of people gathering unless they are family units. The Last Sunday open house for April has been cancelled.

It was sad for us to have to forgo our annual Memorial Day weekend festivities for this year, but unavoidable. We still welcome people to visit. Flags will fly over veterans' graves and we hope to have the gates open on Sunday, May 24th, and Monday, May 25th, but will make a final decision on this when we get closer to that weekend.

We're continuing to work on projects, including our new signage which should begin to appear soon, and a nearly completed monument resetting project which has involved a number of large monuments that had been toppled over. I am particularly pleased that Benjamin J Hawthorne's monument is back on its foundation. He remains one of my favorite UO law grads and perhaps the law school's oldest student ever, graduating at the age of 74.

I am so grateful for all the support we have received over the years that enables us to continue to keep the cemetery in good shape during this very difficult time. Thank you.

We are all in this together.

Caroline Forell, President of the EMCA Board of Directors

Women Who Made a Difference

The EMCA is Commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote. This is the second in a series of some of the women "who made a difference in our community," and who are interred in the historic Masonic cemetery. These entries are compiled by EMCA board member, Alex Brokaw.

Mary Boise Spiller



Mrs. Mary Spiller (1831-1901), the first woman member of the UO faculty, was not a professor, but a principal of its then essential Preparatory Department that readied students for university level coursework. She was a well poised and attractive woman with a charming and radiant personality. Mrs. Spiller taught a variety of courses, including elocution, from 1876-1887. She was instrumental in developing the literary societies at the University. The Mary Spiller House was the first women's dormitory at the University. It opened in 1908 and was built as a memorial to Mary Spiller. It was razed in 1951. Presently, a modern dormitory in the Hamilton Complex bears

her name.

Mary was born near Blandford, MA, and graduated in 1850 from the Mount Holyoke Female Seminary; the first woman's institution in the United States to have a curriculum equivalent to men's colleges. She traveled to Louisiana where she married Levi Spiller, a southern planter. Together they had two children, Reubena and L. Boise. After her husband, an officer in the Confederate Army, died in the Civil War, Mary moved to Oregon where her brother Reuben Patrick Boise was a prominent Salem judge. Both of her children died while she lived in Eugene in a boarding house at 13th and Ferry. She is buried with them at the Eugene Masonic Cemetery.

Catherine Sluyter Davis



Catherine Sluyter (1811-1898) was born in New York state. After her family moved to Pennsylvania and then to Ohio, she met and married Benjamin Davis and they had five children. The family was one of the very early settlers in this area. In 1847 they traveled from Indiana to Eugene, and settled on a donation land claim northwest of Eugene. After Benjamin died in 1858, Catherine lived on the claim until all her children were grown and married.

Catherine was also a nurse. When she was young, she studied medicine with her physician brother-in-law. No doctors lived in or around Eugene when she and her family arrived, so she generously ministered to the sick. She continued nursing even after doctors had opened practices. One rainy winter night she rode to Pleasant Hill and saved one of the Hendricks brothers from death.

Her obituary says that:

"Many a time she mounted her fine riding horse during the dark hours of night and started out on a mission of mercy for a hard ride of from 15 to 25 miles, and that too, without compensation."

Her daughter, Samantha, watched the children of Eugene and Mary Skinner. When she was just 16, Samantha married James Huddleston, owner of Eugene's first trading post.

Catherine died at age 87, "a good, noble woman, and every pioneer in Lane County will hear of her death with sadness."

Masonic Cemetery Operations: COVID-19

The current COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the lives and businesses of many. For current information on sales of burial space and for burials (full body or cremains), please call the Cemetery Administrator, Sally Dietrich, at (541) 515-0536. We will be monitoring what is permitted by the state in the future.

Respect the Space

We'd like to ask your assistance. Please report any inappropriate behavior you observe to the police at the non-emergency number: (541) 682-5111.

You can also alert the cemetery to inappropriate behavior and vandalism by leaving a message at (541) 684-0949, or by email at emca1859@gmail.com. There has been some recent vandalism and inappropriate behavior, and the police are aware of the problem. Do not interact with problematic people yourself.

John Bredesen, eNewsletter Editor
Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association

Mission Statement

To restore, rehabilitate, maintain, interpret and operate the historic Eugene Masonic Cemetery and Hope Abbey Mausoleum as a cultural and natural resource for the community.

The cemetery is operated for the public benefit,
but it is private property.
(A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization)



Eugene Masonic Cemetery
ASSOCIATION

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