



December, 2024

Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association eNewsletter



"Last Sunday" Open House

As is our tradition, we will not host an open house in December. The next "Last Sunday" Open House will be on Sunday, January 26th, 2025.

The Staff and the Board of Directors wish you and yours a happy and safe holiday season.

Lost Trees



The article below was written by our Site Manager, Diego Llewellyn-Jones. Diego reflects on some of the events the cemetery has dealt with in 2024.

The number of trees in the Eugene Masonic Cemetery is amazing for being within an urban residential area. To give you some idea of the significance of that statement, look at the photograph above, which was taken by amateur photographer Philip Bayles and is used with permission. The heavy tree growth in the center of the photo roughly defines the limits of the cemetery. If you look just below the center of the photograph, you can clearly see Hope Abbey Mausoleum as a visual reference.

The majority of the trees you see are Douglas firs, with the lower right area of the grounds largely taken over by oak trees, remnants of the oak savannah that once covered the entire cemetery and surrounding area before the firs moved in.

Cemetery Tree Saga of 2024

Diego Llewellyn-Jones, Site Manager



Every morning I look out the window and can't remember the previous day, but I can and do think back to January—my bike ride to work through the slush, the steam on my glasses, trees downed everywhere. I remember the oak limbs floating like ghosts over the tombstones, hours behind a chainsaw. We lost three

trees to the snow that month.

The next thing it was spring and the oaks were coming back alive. One of them didn't wake up. The leaves never showed. It stayed grey as winter. Along the gravel path, between the main entrance gate and Hope Abbey, an oak pillar with three reaching limbs dwindled. Cause of death unknown. I took a photo.

In the summertime, a young Douglas-fir, having grown up in a crowd of bigger ones, could take it no longer. Emerald to copper, you could almost see it happen. I called someone to come take it away along with the oak. Another more mature Douglas-fir at the top of the hill died just weeks later. It was a much bigger job, and we had to move markers aside. Neighbors came to watch as logs big as cars plummeted and then, slowed by ropes, were gently guided by the arborist ground crew into massive piles we then chopped and hauled away over the following days.

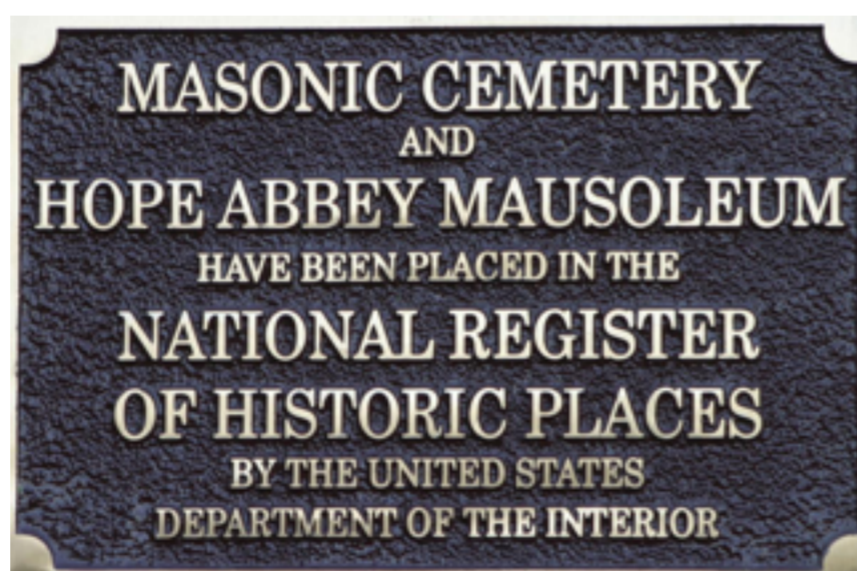
Drought conditions exacerbating the stress of fungal pathogens is likely what led to the deaths of our two Douglas-firs. The same is the case for the young Madrone that died in August, downhill of the Whiteaker family mausoleum, its older sibling's dead trunk looming across the road.

We leave snags standing when we can. Of the seven trees that died this year, four are now snags, memorials of what once lived, allowed to continue serving the birds and bugs and other things living all over them still. The interactions leading to death and decay, a natural part of the forest's succession, simply make room for more growth. What is dead is not lost, but transformed.

—Full of Life—

The History and Character of Eugene's Masonic Cemetery

Something worth reading one month at a time.



In October, we started a serial presentation of the Eugene Masonic Cemetery's publication *Full of Life*, a short book on the history and background of the cemetery. A link to this month's chapter appears below.

Full of Life is the product of much research of historic documents available to the several authors.

The chapter this month is a short narrative giving some background on Freemasonry, better known as Masons, and their many contributions to early Eugene. They founded the Eugene Masonic cemetery with Eugene Skinner as the first Grand Master, buried in it.

If you visit the cemetery, his grave is easily found by using a copy of the free brochure, "Self-Guided Walking Tour", available outside the small building near Hope Abbey Mausoleum. The burial location for Skinner and his wife Mary is #16 on the map.

Because of the size of the print in the original book, it's suggested that you read these chapters on a laptop or large computer screen.

Click on the title below to access this month's chapter.
Chapter Four: [The Masons](#)

John Bredesen, eNewsletter Editor
Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association

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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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