



December, 2022

Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association eNewsletter



Last Sunday Open House



We will not be hosting an open house of Hope Abbey Mausoleum in December. The open house program will resume in 2023 on January 29.

Music To Die For has completed its musical run for 2022. It will return next year on June 11, 2023, at 2 PM. Mark your calendar.

Grave Marker Restoration



Since the beginning of EMCA's tenure in 1995 as owners of the ten acre Masonic cemetery, repairs to vandalized and weathered grave markers have been an important objective. Supervising this work is the responsibility of the Site Management Committee under the leadership of board member Elizabeth Southworth.

A couple of years ago, 96 markers were identified as needing professional repair. Historic Preservation Northwest (HPNW) from Albany, Oregon, was chosen to do this work, based on many factors, including the quality of work they had done for us on previous projects. The large job required that markers be re-leveled, reset and/or repaired. HPNW began the project in March 2022 and finished in October 2022.

HPNW follows the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Resources. All interventions with grave markers were made starting with the gentlest means first. When any material needed to be replaced (such as new lime mortar for deteriorated lime mortar), the new material was matched in composition, design, color and texture to the original. Any substitute materials were used on a limited basis, and only when the substitute materials would match the general properties of the historic material and would not damage the grave marker. Only specified gravel was used to level the grave markers; no concrete or cement was employed.

HPNW surveyed the cemetery in 2020–21, recording all markers within the cemetery and flagging those markers that needed work. The higher priority stone repair was done in 2021. The 2022 project addressed the remaining markers that needed work, and those 96 markers at the beginning turned into 99 markers by the end of the project.

All the work was done by David Pinyerd and Bernadette Niederer of HPNW. Both are graduates of the Historic Preservation master's degree program at the University of Oregon and are pictured in the photo above. Both trained in cemetery preservation under the tutelage of Bruce Howard and Sally Donovan. The Fall 2022 issue of [Monumental News](#) (page 5) featured an article by Pinyerd and his earlier experiences at the cemetery.

For a fascinating look at the detail surrounding the restoration of two monuments, look [here](#) and [here](#). Click on the first photograph, then sequence through the series. Note that to the right of each image there is a description of what is being done at that stage of the restoration.

After completing a project of this size, HPNW usually has a long series of recommendations for a cemetery. "However, in the case of Eugene Masonic Cemetery, we have little to suggest. They have their act together." according to Pinyerd of HPNW.

Of course, anything continually exposed to the elements, be it wood siding on a home or a cemetery monument, is going to require maintenance. The cemetery grounds, markers and Hope Abbey Mausoleum are certainly not exempt. For this reason we've been quietly building an endowment. At some point in the future, it will help provide the needed financial resources to continue the work necessary to keep this city treasure beautiful and safe, far into the future.

Another Project Finished



Occasionally a person will stumble on the stairs leading to Hope Abbey. To our knowledge, no one has fallen, but there have been a few embarrassing moments as a visitor struggles for balance. So why take chances?

Recently, funds became available to design and install a pair of custom handrails at the sides of the steps. Board member Denny Hellesvig was called upon to create a design in keeping with the unique feeling of the building. The local metal fabrication shop Mercury Metal created the handrails, and an employee, Mike Hartley, volunteered to install them on one of his days off.

The picture shows one of the handrails installed on the concrete structure that is both a set of stairs and a wheelchair ramp.

Trees of the Cemetery

Fun Facts



Woodpeckers, such as the downy woodpecker, the red-breasted nuthatch, and the northern flicker create holes in trees called cavities. They hammer out the cavity in rotting wood in coniferous woodlands, and are called primary cavity nesters. Other birds such as the western screech-owl (photo left), the red-breasted sapsucker, and the black-capped chickadee build their nests in existing holes, and are called secondary cavity nesters. Other animals such as raccoons, bats and honeybees also dwell in the

cemetery's tree cavities.

Many of the cemetery's Douglas-firs have a curious bulge or a forked leader part way up their trunks. These two conditions developed after the trees had their tops cut off almost 70 years ago. Over time, each tree developed a new top from a lateral branch just below the cut. In the early years, the trees had a very noticeable crook at that point. Over time the crook has been covered by the growing trunk, so all we see now in most cases is a bulge.

One Douglas-fir east of the Public Square has a long, barely visible scar that spirals down its trunk from high in the canopy. This tree was struck by lightning in September, 2001. The lightning coursed down the outside of the tree, stripping bark and casting it in all directions, some as far as 60 feet from the base of the tree. The next morning a woodpecker and an owl were found dead directly below where they had been roosting when the lightning struck the tree. For months, visitors came from both near and far to pay their respects to the force of nature.

During February, 2002, two firs lost their tops during a severe windstorm. One tree was home to a wild honey bee colony, which lived in a cavity nearly 25 feet from the ground. When the tree snapped, the honey comb scattered. The sweet bounty was retrieved and enjoyed by neighbors. Both of these "snags" have been retained to provide cavity habitat for birds, insects, and other creatures that rely on the dead trees for feeding, roosting, or nesting.

The cemetery's one artificial stump is located on the northwest slope of the cemetery. This is a six foot tall Woodmen of the World (WOW) monument, carved from sandstone and erected in 1909 to commemorate the life of WOW member Robert Kirkpatrick. The tree stump with broken limbs represents a life cut short.

Excerpted from the EMCA brochure *Trees of the Eugene Masonic Cemetery*.

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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