



February, 2022

Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association eNewsletter



Last Sunday Open House



We will be hosting our regular Last Sunday Open House this coming Sunday. It's an opportunity to visit the inside of the beautifully restored 1914 Hope Abbey Mausoleum. The doors will be open from 1 to 4 PM, Sunday, February 27, 2022.

There will be two knowledgeable people on hand to answer questions you might have about the historic building, as well as the cemetery itself. Masking WILL be required in the building. Please park on city streets, because there is no parking on the cemetery grounds.

President's Corner

This year the EMCA will focus on fundraising for our general endowment. In preparation for initiating a fundraising campaign later this year, the board held a retreat in the fall where we crafted our vision statement:

We envision a well-maintained historic cemetery—a welcoming and natural setting where all people may continue to come to inter, honor and remember those who have died.

EMCA is proud of what the Masonic Cemetery and Hope Abbey have to offer. Our vision is to continue operating a cemetery that will remain the treasure it has become even when we no longer have full-body burial lots to sell. While we plan to offer various options for cremains into the foreseeable future, the income this produces will not be sufficient to sustain the current level of care that the cemetery and Hope Abbey require.

We are first and foremost a final resting place, but we are so much more. The cemetery and Hope Abbey are uniquely beautiful spaces in the heart of Eugene. They are places where those who have lost loved ones can mourn and remember. They are also places where the public can reflect, enjoy nature, honor the dead, and learn about Eugene's past. Thanks to the time and money that's been invested since EMCA took over from the Masons in 1993, the cemetery looks better than ever. Barked walking paths and updated signage have been incorporated into the lovingly tended landscape that surrounds the markers. Many of the historic markers have been or are being repaired. Marker cleaning continues to be a priority. And magnificent Hope Abbey has been completely restored.

What does EMCA still have to accomplish? We need to make sure that there is a reliable income stream so that the cemetery continues to provide joy and solace to those who come, whether to visit their dearly departed, listen to live music, walk their dogs, learn about Eugene's pioneers, or stroll and commune with nature. Our vision that fuels our fundraising is intended to help make this a reality.

By Caroline Forell, Board President

An Arboretum at the Eugene Masonic Cemetery



The EMCA is seeking the designation of the cemetery as an accredited arboretum. Accreditation will be sought through ArbNet, an international community of arboreta.

Once the cemetery becomes an accredited arboretum, the EMCA Board of Directors will oversee the details of operation. Visitors will benefit from identification of, and information

related to, trees and woody plants in the cemetery.

There are many cemeteries throughout the world that are accredited arboreta, not the least of which is Arlington National Cemetery. As an accredited arboretum, the Eugene Masonic Cemetery will be included in the Morton Register of Arboreta.

Becoming an accredited arboretum would certainly be a badge of honor that lets visitors know that we, as the cemetery's stewards, will strive to care for the trees and plants in this urban setting. More information is available from ArbNet [here](#).

By Shawn Walker, Board Member

Karen Seidel Wins Award



On February 12, Karen Seidel, a long-time member of our cemetery's board of directors, received a well-deserved Lifetime Achievement Award from the Lane County Historical Society.

Karen has always loved doing historical research, especially as it relates to the Eugene area. When she retired, she carried her research skills with her, not only to our cemetery and the City Club but also to Eugene's Historic Review Board, the Lane County Historical Museum, and the Fairmount Neighbors history project.

It was a natural project for her to learn about the lives of everybody buried in the Eugene Masonic Cemetery before 1900. Pulling together resources from the early days, she collected information about a wide range of prominent local citizens. Those stories were then placed on signs at their graves to form a historic walking tour of the cemetery. Just recently, Karen contributed to a thorough review of that historical signage, a review that added material, including engaging photos, to many of the signs.

Several chapters in *Full of Life*, a book about the cemetery, are also the result of Karen's work. In addition, she identified all the veterans in the cemetery and discovered where they are located, thus enabling the tradition of placing flags on veterans' graves every Memorial Day.

Karen's research work led her to join the cemetery's board. For many years, she has been absolutely indispensable as board secretary, as the editor-in-chief of our multi-page semiannual newsletter, to which she has often contributed historical articles, and as a general wise head.

Her energetic dedication, particularly to the historical aspects of the cemetery, has been a constant example to us all. We are indeed fortunate to have her on our board, and are delighted to see her long service recognized by the award.

Obsidian Walk

The Eugene Masonic Cemetery seems to be a favorite destination for many hikes sponsored by the Obsidians, a local non-profit outdoor club involved in hiking, backpacking, mountain climbing, cross country skiing and other outdoor activities. ([Website](#))

A recent event was called Recharge Your Hike. While the hike visited several locations, the connection to the Masonic Cemetery was to visit the grave of Dr. Karl Kordesch, acknowledged leader in the development of the alkaline battery we all use. During the hike, the group visited The Nightingale Hosted Shelter in South Eugene and gifted them with a supply of—you guessed it—alkaline batteries. Of note, Dr. Kordesch's daughter is a member of the cemetery's Board of Directors.

A hike later this month will celebrate the 200th birthday of Thomas Condon, who is buried in the EMC near Hope Abbey Mausoleum. Condon was a minister, geologist and paleontologist. He was appointed as the first State Geologist for Oregon in 1872, he later resigned to become the first professor of geology at the University of Oregon. Condon was a truly remarkable man. Robert Clark's thick book, *The Odyssey of Thomas Condon*, tells his story.

REMEMBER THAT THE MASONIC CEMETERY

- Is privately owned, but opens its grounds to the public, subject to COVID-19 safeguards.
- Is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and is not subsidized by the city of Eugene.
- Is eligible for the Oregon Cultural Trust match.
- Has a website, eugenemasoniccemetery.org, with lots of information about the cemetery.
- Has free informational brochures available at the Garden Cottage, including a walking tour map.
- Has burial rights and cremains space for sale. Contact Sally Dietrich at (541) 684-0949 or [by email](#).
- Uses PayPal for on-line donations. Please [click here](#) to donate.
- Archives issues of both newsletters.

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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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