

Fall 2014

News from Oak Hill

The NEWSLETTER of the FRIENDS of OAK HILL CEMETERY

Oak Hill's Annual Meeting Held on June 2

President's Report for the year ended April 30, 2014

The President of Oak Hill Cemetery submits his Report for year ending April 30th, 2014 together with the Report of the Treasurer and the Report of the Superintendent.

The Report of the Treasurer shows in some detail the operating income and expenditures during the fiscal year together with a synopsis of the Company's financial resources as of the close of the fiscal year. The report shows that the balance of the endowment funds of the company at year end was \$3,099,166 and the balance of the endowment in the Preservation Foundation was \$1,090,348.

There were 47 interments between May 1, 2013 and April 30, 2014. This brings the total interments within the cemetery to 19,565.

A project to create new in-ground inurnment spaces was completed October 31, 2013. The eight new spaces located at Beech "Tree Lawn" along East



Oak Hill Board Members left to right: Dave Jackson, Superintendent, Loretta Castaldi, Treasurer, George G. Hill, President, Marisa Bourgoin, Secretary, Ella Pozell, Past Superintendent, David C. de Vicq, Vice President

Gate Avenue are especially attractive. They lie between the curbed border of the road and a newly created retaining wall. By the end of the fiscal year over half of the new sites were sold and the remaining sites have since been taken. Based on the high interest in cremation space

in grassy areas, we will be investigating other areas where similar sites may be placed.

Another project, restoration of the Renwick Chapel, was approaching its completion as the fiscal year ended. This major project, the largest ever done on the Renwick Chapel, was a pri-

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OAK HILL CEMETERY

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Washington, D.C. 20007-2923
Telephone: 202-337-2835
Fax: 202-337-6481
www.oakhillcemeterydc.org

Email: oak_hill_cemetery@verizon.net

Cemetery Hours

Office and grounds:
9:00 am to 4:30 pm, M - F
Saturday 11:00 am - 4:00 pm.
Sunday 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm,
(weekends walk-in gate only
and no drive-in access) weather permitting.
Please observe rules posted at gate.

Board of Managers

George G. Hill, President,
John W. Gill, President Emeritus
David C. de Vicq, Vice President
Marisa Bourgoïn, Secretary
Loretta Castaldi, Treasurer
David Jackson, Superintendent

Cemetery Publications

Available in the cemetery office

"Oak Hill Cemetery"

A brief history – contains a map of the cemetery, list of notable people buried in Oak Hill and a brief history of our founding. \$3.00

Oak Hill Note Cards

Set of eight note cards featuring four scenes of Oak Hill Cemetery through the seasons. Envelopes included. \$5.00

"Oak Hill Cemetery, Georgetown, DC Monument Inscriptions and Burial Data"

Two-volume set, including matching sleeve. \$175.00

All photos in this newsletter were taken by Oak Hill Staff, unless otherwise noted.

President's Report *(continued from page 1)*

mary focus for the Board of Managers and the Superintendent for much of the year. We actively made decisions about the colors of replacement roof tiles, stone mortar, and paint selections. Meanwhile the execution of the project by the various contractors was skillfully overseen by Vice President David deVicq (who continues to provide significant guidance and oversight of projects) and Superintendent Dave Jackson. A total of fourteen different contractors* were engaged to do a variety of work towards the restoration. These ranged from roofers to floor refinishers, plumbers to painters, lighting specialists to plaster artisans. The result was the restoration of the "Gothic Gem" so beautifully envisioned by William W. Corcoran and designed by James Renwick, Jr. The structure continues to be a gathering place for funerals, community meetings, weddings, and other significant events. It is truly a "gem."

In her first full year as a Board member, Loretta Castaldi has offered meaningful insight and perspective to the decisions of the board. Her contributions of overseeing a difficult accounting conversion, selection of a tax preparation company, insurance broker, and the addition of some controls and procedures has been invaluable. Oak Hill is fortunate to have her as member of the Board of Managers. Also, we are

indebted to Marisa Bourgoïn, the Board Secretary, for her support and enthusiastic discussion of all things Oak Hill. Marisa represented Oak Hill at a recent Wedding Show promoting the Renwick Chapel. She also diligently records minutes and notes of our Board meetings. Our Board is well-rounded, with a variety of experiences and perspectives. It is a true pleasure to work with these professional individuals.

In his first full year as Superintendent, Dave Jackson has been busy with projects and site sales and the efforts necessary to manage a small business. Anyone who has similar experience as a business manager knows this is no small endeavor. He has changed the work schedule of the staff to gain greater efficiency. We now open to the public on weekends and holidays, thus providing exposure for the cemetery and a welcome to individuals who otherwise might not have been able to visit. Dave has offered weekend services when possible to families who desire them because of travel and other busy family obligations. All of this has reinforced the Board's effort to be an open, caring, service-oriented cemetery where the needs of families and loved-ones continue to be served. These are steps towards fulfillment of our "continuing to serve" commitment.

Assisting Dave in the opera-

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Treasurer's Report

During fiscal year 2014, several significant projects were completed.

by Loretta Castaldi

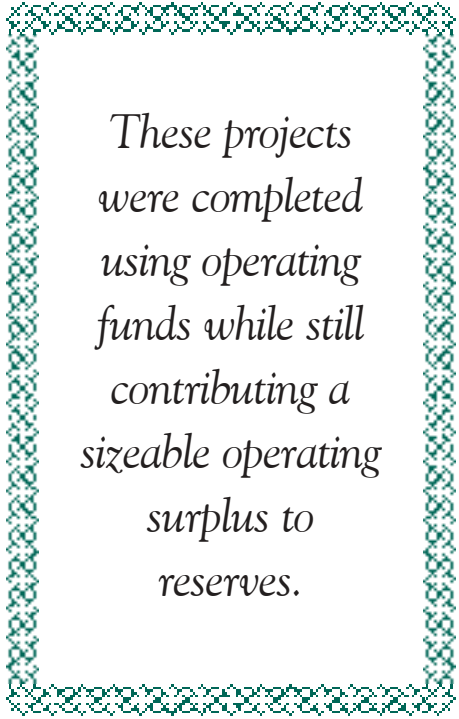
Oak Hill Cemetery ended the fiscal year on April 30, 2014 in stable financial condition. The Cemetery has no debt. The Cemetery has adequate inventory of saleable sites and financial reserves to fund Cemetery operations for many years to come. Moreover, the Cemetery has significant, untapped space that can be developed into additional burial sites as the current inventory is depleted.

During fiscal year 2014, several significant projects were completed. Notably, Renwick Chapel was totally renovated from floor boards to the roof shingles. A significant portion of renovation costs was covered by record donations from generous supporters of the Oak Hill Cemetery Preservation Foundation.

Other projects included Oak Hill Cemetery Company augmenting the inventory of saleable sites by creating eight

new burial sites, Beech Tree Lawn Cremation Sites, along East Gate Avenue. Work was also completed to correct drainage problems in Chapel Valley section of the cemetery. These projects were completed using operating funds while still contributing a sizeable operating surplus to reserves.

The Superintendent established a quarterly financial reporting process in fiscal year 2014. The Board is using the quarterly reports to analyze the long term financial prospects and to develop long term strategies for maintaining the operations and beauty of Oak Hill Cemetery.



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Oak Hill Cemetery Annual Meeting April 2, 2014

Superintendent's Report for the year ended April 30, 2014

by Dave Jackson

The end of the fiscal year 2013-14 marked the first full year of my being the Superintendent at Oak Hill Cemetery. In earlier jobs, I have learned that it takes about two years in a new position before one gains a fairly full understanding of all that goes on. I came to Oak Hill with a wide range of prior experience and, frankly, thought that being the Superintendent would be an easier transition than normal. I was wrong! I continue to learn more and more about Oak Hill and the various aspects that it encompasses. It is a very interesting, unique, and complicated place in which to work. Darla and I both are tremendously enjoying our experience here.

To recap the year; Board approved budget; had one annual meeting and six Board of Manager meetings; oversaw 47 interments; sold 38 sites; built 8 new lawn cremation sites; restored one chapel; had one very cold winter; visited four other cemeteries; hired one new weekend office person; published two newsletters; opened cobble gutters on Reno Hill; repaired

damaged drainage in Chapel Valley; replaced brick walk in Chapel Valley; installed new water supply line in Staff Building; repaired plumbing and ceiling in Gatehouse; among other things.

Working with the Board of Managers at Oak Hill Cemetery is one of the best experiences a person in my position could ask for. They have been supportive, helpful when needed, and cooperative when asked to take on matters of importance to the Cemetery. Oak Hill Cemetery Company is fortunate to have this group oversee the Cemetery operations. I hope that Lot Holders appreciate them as much as I do.

Another special mention goes to Melissa Van Schaik. Melissa came to work for Oak Hill about five years ago. When Ella Pozell retired, Melissa endured the changeover with grace and determination. She has been invaluable to me in many ways, not the least of which is keeping me somewhat organized (a nearly impossible task!) deflecting or absorbing

telephone and walk-in traffic for me, and accepting new responsibilities which were clearly not what she expected when she started here. She has done all this, worked nearly full-time in our office, commuted by train every day from and back to Frederick, MD, all while completing a Master's Degree in Library Science from the University of Maryland. What a feat!

Sadly, or happily for her, Melissa has accepted a library position in Frederick and will be moving on with her chosen career. I congratulate her and wish her the best for the future. I am joined by all of the Board of Managers who wish her well. A new office administrator will be brought on to fill the position. A new person will find large shoes to fill!

Brian Williamson, the Grounds Crew foreman, and all the Grounds Crew, Mainor Pinar-Torres, Jose Guzman, Abraham Mejia, and Rico Haraujo, have had a very good year. These gentlemen were also presented several changes in how



Oak Hill Grounds Crew left to right and years with company: Ricardo Haraújo (4yrs.), Jose Guzman (23yrs.), Brian Williamson (26yrs.), Abraham Mejia (11yrs.), Mainor Pinar-Torres (23yrs.)

they work and each has accepted the changes with enthusiasm and good spirits. Having a landscape crew like ours is a unique situation. The longevity and dedication shown by these gentlemen is extraordinary. Again, I hope that Lot Holders appreciate the extent of the work and dedication shown by them.

I am fortunate to have a predecessor who continues to have interest in what we do. Ella Pozell has been invaluable in helping me adapt to Oak Hill. We talk frequently, almost weekly as I have questions about this or that which she helps with. Her knowledge and guidance have been terrific. I depend on her a lot!

I am also fortunate to have a wife who understands and supports my work here. As many of you know, she is a Pozell, being Joe Pozell's niece. Darla was the inspiration to come here and, although she isn't an employee of the cemetery or responsible for any of its workings, she is a great help and a person who I lean on.

Finally, thank you to the many donors who this year have supported Oak Hill and the Oak Hill Preservation Foundation. Most donations were targeted at the Preservation Foundation to fund the Renwick Chapel Restoration Project. Many other donations were given to the Cemetery and to the Friends of

Oak Hill, our beautification effort. Our donors reflect the philanthropic legacy of our founder, William Wilson Corcoran. Your gifts, his inaugural and follow-up trusteeship, and the gifts given over the past one hundred sixty five years have produced the Oak Hill Cemetery of today. What a special place!

So... as the song goes, it's been a very good year! Many thanks to our donors, the Board of Managers, Melissa, the Grounds Crew, Ella and Darla for your help.

Respectfully Submitted
Dave Jackson
Superintendent

Annual Meeting (among others) Takes Place in the Newly Restored Renwick Chapel

On June 2nd, the annual meeting of the Oak Hill Cemetery Company was called to order by President George Hill. The reports of the President, Treasurer and Superintendent are included in this issue of our newsletter. To summarize, Oak Hill had a fine year with the completion of the restoration of the Renwick Chapel completed as well as

projects to develop additional inventory for sale and the conversion of the company accounting records to a more effective format.

As you will see from the picture on page one, the Board was joined at the meeting by former Superintendent Mrs. Ella Pozell. Ella now lives in Asheboro, North Carolina. She lives within a two hour drive from where her

son Joseph and his wife, Leigh Ann, live in Boone, North Carolina. In Asheboro, Ella has numerous cousins, nieces, and nephews who she is constantly with. She has visited DC a few times, most recently in July, filling in while Superintendent Jackson and his wife were vacationing. Ella is still keenly interested in the happenings at Oak Hill. We always value her



Interior of newly restored Renwick Chapel
Courtesy of Dan Girard Photography
Fine Art America - Dan Girard



Reverend Rachel Vaugness of Georgetown Presbyterian Church, Reverend Stewart Kenworth of Christ Church and John Graham of Grace Church at rededication of Renwick Chapel.

presence and enjoy her counsel.

On April 30th, the Renwick Chapel was host to the Citizen's Association of Georgetown for its monthly meeting. Over fifty Georgetowners braved a wet and soggy evening to attend! Luckily there were tents set up in front of the Chapel providing covered

space for the CAG office to check in members and for the members to partake of food and beverages that were supplied by local restaurants. George Hill, Marisa Bourgoïn, and Dave Jackson combined their talents and knowledge of Oak Hill to present a program about the Cemetery

and recent restoration project. The attendees were enthusiastic with their praise and appreciation for the event!

And then, on Sunday afternoon, May 4th, a ceremonial "rededication" of the Chapel was held. Three prominent local pastors resided, Reverend Stewart Kenworth of Christ Church, Reverend John Graham of Grace Church, and Reverend Rachel Vaugness of Georgetown Presbyterian Church. Each provided a special blessing and encouragement for the future of our Chapel.

Since the Chapel project was finished and re-dedicated, it has been the site of funerals and community meetings. We also have weddings scheduled for later this year. The Chapel is again the jewel it was designed to be with an even more impressive history of stories from our community.

President's Report (continued from page 2)

tion of the cemetery, Melissa Van Schaick has been especially helpful in her role as Office Administrator. Lou Krach, our office contact on weekends was a positive addition to the staff and has done a great job. And our grounds crew, Mainor Pinar-Torres, Jose Guzman, Abraham Mejia, and Rico Haraujo, led by long-time crew foreman Brian Williamson, has done a magnificent job keeping the grounds up to the standards we all expect. Thanks to all of the staff for their efforts in the past year.

"Continuing to Serve" is a phase adopted more than a year ago for use in marketing the cemetery and describing what we do. We will "continue to

serve" families whose loved ones reside at Oak Hill and the families of those who will be here in the future. Speaking for the other members of the Board of Managers, we are committed to making sure that Oak Hill Cemetery "continues to serve" for many future generations. Thank you for your past support. We hope to earn your future support as well.

George G. Hill
President

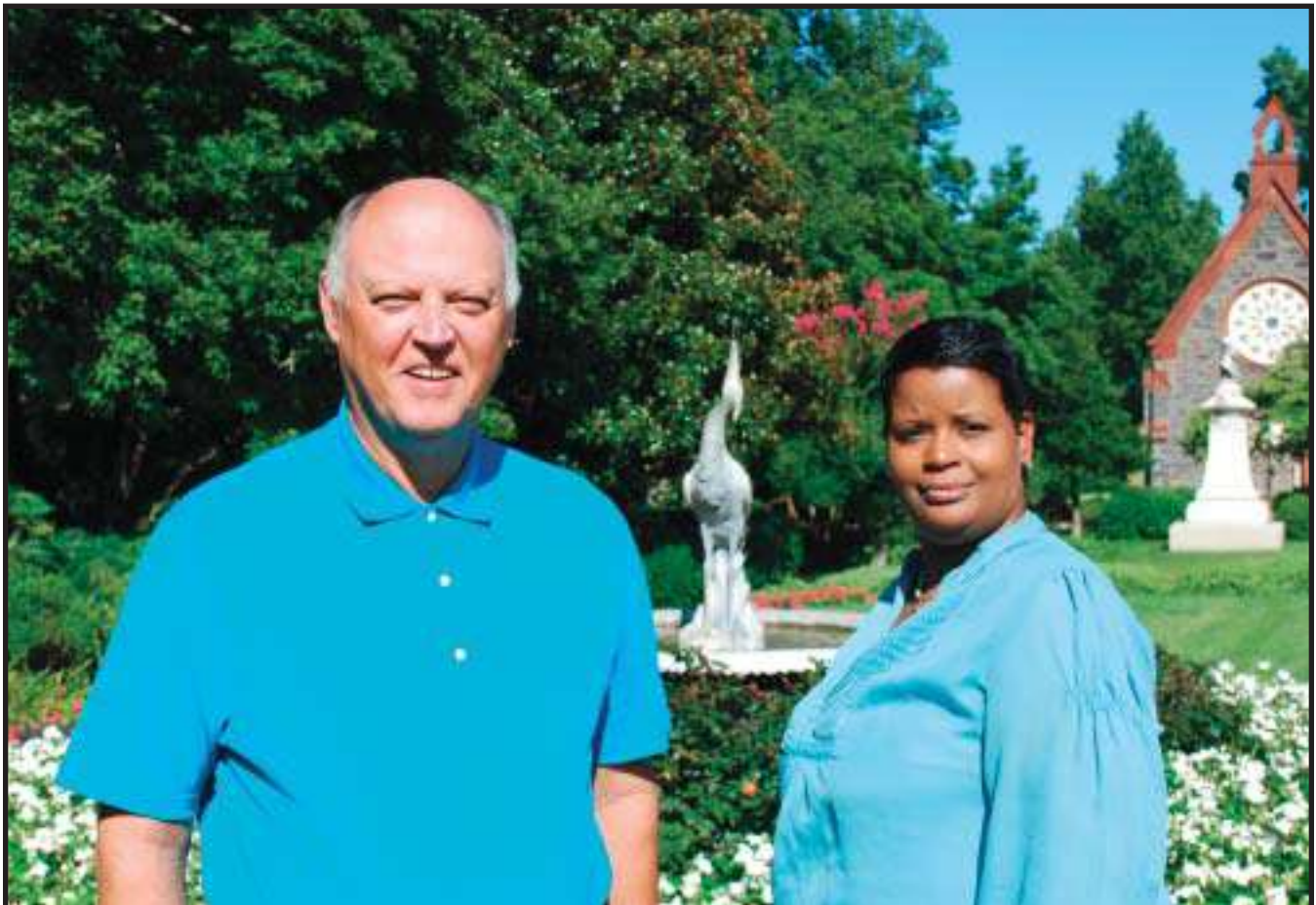
* - The contractors were Lorton Stone, Wagner Roofing, Gianetti Studios, Urbas Plastering, Image Painting, Frye Plumbing, Andy Seferlis, Washington Art Glass, Arlington Carpet and Flooring, Milton's Chandeliers, Hardwood Artisans, William G. Hyman Electrical Contractors, Sani Air Conditioning and Heating, and DC Movers.

Tonya Miller Joins Oak Hill as Office Administrator

Tonya Miller joined the Oak Hill Cemetery staff as our new Office Administrator in July. She replaces our long-time Office Administrator, Melissa Van Schaick who left for a position with the Frederick Library. Tanya is an experienced office manager with a thorough knowledge of office procedures, accounting entry, and word processing. Some of her responsibilities include preparing the donor response letters and answering questions from telephone, e-mail, and visitors. Her background includes similar roles with a real estate management firm and the USDA Graduate School.

She and her husband live in Washington, DC and have two children. Their daughter is a freshman at North Carolina A&T College. Their son is in his second year of pre-school at Cedar Tree Academy. In her "spare" time, Tanya operates a catering events company, is an avid couponer and enjoys time with her many relatives here in the DC area.

Welcome, Tanya!!



Superintendent Dave Jackson with Oak Hill's new Office Administrator, Tonya Miller.

Loss of "The" American Ash Tree

"The" Ash was well established by the time Robinson Crusoe was published (1719), more so at the birth of George Washington (1732).

This year marks the unfortunate and irreversible loss and removal of the largest tree within Oak Hill Cemetery. "The" Ash tree is estimated to have started its life in the early seventeenth century about the time of the births of King Louis XV of France, Frederick the Great of Prussia and Leopold Mozart, the father of Wolfgang. "The" Ash was well established by the time Robinson Crusoe was published (1719), more so at the birth of George Washington (1732). By the Revolutionary War, it was well along to becoming a strong presence in its neighborhood of foliage. Samuel Davidson built Evermay in 1801 and "The" Ash was in the Evermay land that was transferred to Oak Hill by Davidson's descendants in 1865. The tree was so large then that cemetery grounds and roads in the area were laid out to go around it. "The" Ash continued its growth through the years. After a series of hot, dry summers, "The" Ash dropped nearly



Removal of the "The" Ash was a major undertaking, requiring the expertise of Bartlett Tree Experts overseen by Bill Eck and supported by Crane Service Company. On September 13th, Rob Edlen painstakingly dismantled "The" Ash while John Mutispaugh gently lowered each section to the ground with a 120 ton crane.

all its leaves in mid-summer 2012. Despite efforts in the year that followed, it showed scant signs of life. This year we determined "The" Ash had indeed passed on.

"The" Ash diameter at shoulder height was measured at 63 inches and its girth was over 17 feet. The height exceeded 80 feet. Removal of the "The" Ash was a major undertaking, requiring the expertise of Bartlett Tree Experts overseen by Bill Eck and supported by Crane Service Company. On September 13th,

Rob Edlen painstakingly dismantled "The" Ash while John Mutispaugh gently lowered each section to the ground with a 120 ton crane. In all, over sixty tons of wood were removed. We appreciated their care for the tree and all the surrounding monuments and other great trees in the area. The base of "The" Ash will remain for a few years while the area is stabilized. Someday, another tree will be planted, starting another march through history.

Memorial Trees at Oak Hill Cemetery

A unique opportunity for Patrons to establish a lasting memorial and enhance the landscape



We will designate many of the "Memorial Tree" sites. These trees will be identified by a six-inch monument at the base identifying an honoree. The monument will be carved stone and will be moved from the tree trunk as the tree matures, preserving the memorial aspect of the planting.

From time to time, the Cemetery is asked to memorialize someone, a family member or close friend, who may or may not be interred at Oak Hill. The "Memorial Trees" provide a unique opportunity for Patrons to establish a lasting memorial and enhance the landscape. Patrons may select the site, the tree species (if there are multiple species designated) and the inscription for the stone monument. Trees and monuments will be installed each November. Commitments for trees should be made by the end of September each year. Here is how it works:

We will plant trees in the Cemetery in the fall to replace some lost over the years. With the counsel of Bartlett Trees, we are selecting sites for new trees, determining the best species suited for each site. Each site will be evaluated as to its location, available sunlight, and its effect on the surrounds over the long term. The majority of the native trees in the cemetery are White Oak and Poplar. Over

the years many varieties were added but sometimes in their maturity, they became a problem due to root invasion or blocking sunlight. Our plan is that newly planted trees will enhance the Cemetery in the best possible way for decades.

We will designate many of the "Memorial Tree" sites. These trees will be identified by a six-inch monument at the base identifying an honoree. The monument will be carved stone and will be moved from the tree trunk as the tree matures, preserving the memorial aspect of the planting. The Memorial Trees will be ordered in October for November delivery and planting each year. Monuments will be ordered at the same time so they are installed as the trees are planted.

This will be an on-going program as the need for replacement trees will always be present.

If you are interested in being a Patron of a Memorial Tree, please contact the Oak Hill Cemetery office for all the details.



Contributors to Oak Hill

March 28, 2014 - September 16, 2014

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