



Spring 2017

News from Oak Hill

The NEWSLETTER of the FRIENDS of OAK HILL CEMETERY

From The President

Dear Friends at Oak Hill

Before we again overwhelm you with our list of projects, goals and accomplishments, let us explain the reasoning behind our frenetic activity. The Cemetery finds itself in a good time and place, where a fortuitous combination of people and finances have come together to enable the application of considerable resources towards renewing and enhancing our grounds. We are in a virtuous circle, where maintenance not only sustains this very lovely burial ground, but improvements show that the cemetery is financially healthy and prospective buyers know that we will do our best to preserve while moving forward. When the Cemetery Board visited Mount Auburn Cemetery last August, their President David Barnett described his first days, where he considered how best to ease the cemetery into retirement, and transition into museum status. Indeed, we also had considered such an action, but they and we

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now find ourselves perhaps decades away from such a timeline. Morale of employees, Board members and lot holders is strong. We thank you.

Outreach continues to be a priority, as many of our neighbors incorrectly continue to believe

that there is no opportunity for burial at Oak Hill. And so, we have reconstituted our Historic Preservation Foundation, researched fundraising campaigns, begun soliciting grants, increased operating hours, and have begun reworking our website technology. We hope you will also spread our message.

Liz Mizell has settled in as Director of Development of the Historic Preservation Foundation, and has begun the process of grant research and solicitation. The Foundation Board, Mimsey Lindner, Judy Cochran, Rick Fisher, Marisa Bourgoïn, Darla Jackson, Andy Seferlis and I, with the help of Dave Jackson, have met several times to plan our outreach. We are making good progress.

The website improvements, when complete, will enable recordation of burial records in-house, improve reliability and security, enable online contributions and improve our presentation to the public and

continued on page 7

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
on holidays either) weather permitting.
Please observe rules posted at gate.

Board of Managers

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Mimsy Lindner
Judi Cochran
Clift Seferlis
Darla Jackson
David Jackson, Executive Director
Elizabeth Mizell, Development Specialist

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.

Join Us For A Tour of Oak Hill

Saturday, May 13th, 11:00 am.

Meet at the Gatehouse



Andy Seferlis is a long time friend of Oak Hill Cemetery. He is an expert in historic architecture and regularly leads architectural tours in Washington, New York, Philadelphia, and major European Cities. An expert stone sculptor, Andy leads stone-cutting workshops in Maine benefiting an arts organization there. Although, it is extremely difficult to break into his tours schedule, he is also a masonry preservation specialist and has done a number of restoration projects including at Oak Hill Cemetery. Mr. Seferlis serves on the Board of

**Guided Walking Tour
with Clift "Andy" Seferlis,
Reservations are Required**

Directors of the Oak Hill Cemetery Historic Preservation Foundation.

THIS TOUR IS FREE, BUT PARTICIPATION IS LIMITED SO RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED. DONATIONS ARE WELCOME!

Reservations may be made by calling the office at Oak Hill Cemetery 202-337-2835. The tour will be about 1 ½ hours and requires walking up and down the hills in Oak Hill so it can be strenuous. Please wear comfortable shoes!!



Memorial Trees

Establish a lasting memorial

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 coun-



“Memorial Tree” sites. These trees will be identified by a six-inch monument at the base identifying an honoree.

sel 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 at the plantings.

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.



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Superintendent's Report

by Dave Jackson

In his article, President George Hill did his normal excellent job describing the many projects and works-in-progress. The activity around the cemetery is very evident to someone who comes for a visit. We will be quite active with the various projects for some time to come.

You noticed, I am sure, that the masthead of our newsletter has expanded to include the members of our now very active Oak Hill Cemetery Historic Preservation Foundation Board of Directors. Along with our Director of Development, they are working on the creation of an active development program to provide funding for the vast number of projects we need and will need in the foreseeable future. Fun runs and Halloween Parties are not in the DNA of Oak Hill Cemetery. Rather, the tenor will be in keeping with a 19th Century garden cemetery worthy of

the excellent stewardship of our Board of Managers and now our Foundation Board of Directors. Please take note of the Foundation Board activities and lend them your support, both financial and spiritual.

Speaking of spirits, seldom a day goes by that one or two visitors don't come asking to locate the Carroll Mausoleum featured in George Saunders new novel, "Lincoln in the Bardo." John

Kelly of the Washington Post was one of those visitors and featured us in his Metro section article the week of April 17th. Darla and I are listening to the tape version of the book as I write this. So far, I can say it is an interesting piece for 19th century enthusiasts and has a few authentic characters. But most of the characters and the cemetery



Foreman Brian Williamson (28 yrs of service) with Jorge Robles

scenery are fictional. The setting at Oak Hill Cemetery adds immensely to the story, of course. If you want directions to the Carroll Mausoleum, stop by the office for a special card with a map and the non-fiction version of the story.

In the past two years the role of our grounds crew has expanded to include not only grounds but also infrastructure repairs and maintenance. I came to the conclusion that the seasonal duties of gardening, cutting grass, blowing leaves, and the constant general cleanup was falling behind, not because our crew was unwilling. It was simply a manpower issue. Last fall, Jorge Robles worked temporarily with our other grounds men doing the



Carroll Mausoleum Map Card



necessary leaf removal. This spring he graciously agreed to re-join the staff, now as a regular employee. Jorge has experience in general construction so he brings extra skills that we will undoubtedly rely on from time to time. Please welcome Jorge Robles to our staff.

I realized I haven't mentioned our Office Administrator in a newsletter. As is her nature, Margaret Mihori, quietly joined the office staff in 2015. She spent 20+ years with the Japan-US Friendship Commission prior to taking a break to care for her mother. Margaret has two girls, Marisa (an aspiring-to med-school HS sophomore and Jennifer (a "wise-beyond-her-years" twelve-year-old), who keep her and her husband Jim very busy. They live in Great Falls. She is the person who most likely answers your phone call or e-mail, and who greets you when you visit the office. Margaret says she likes her job at Oak Hill and enjoys the opportunity to help with questions, research, and the many visitors we see.

Two more areas were recently developed for casket interments and cremation inurnments. Four casket sites were added at the foot of Honeysuckle Path near our main intersection. Three of the four were taken almost immediately. A path near the 28th Street gate was made ready for inurnment spaces by our staff members Abraham Meija and Rico Haraujo. These are the same, but different, as other pathway cremation options where the inscription will be done on the stone covering the path. This is the first of what will be many times where the sites are the creation of our staff vs. an outside contractor. We will continue to develop inventory in various locations throughout the cemetery. As I often say, I think Oak Hill will be an active cemetery for 50-100 more years.

Early this year, we received a pleasant surprise. A most generous person donated over \$100,000 to the cemetery to be added to our "endowment." She had made provisions for the contribution to be made upon her death. We really appreciate this donation and hope that others will consider making the same gesture in the future.



Margaret Mihori with Dogwoods and Azaleas

We set aside a large part of this newsletter and the last one for information about our iron fence along "R" Street. That fence is a significant structure of the cemetery. Mrs. Lina Steele wrote us after the last newsletter, "The beautiful cast iron fence you hope to have repaired was part of John's (her recently departed husband) daily walk to Montrose

Park..... He admired the beautiful fence which gives the street elegance, and a sense of permanence." Her description, "elegance and a sense of permanence," really struck me. It sums up not only the fence but our entire lovely cemetery. The fence, while being elegant and "permanent", is truly at a state where it must be "restored" as defined in this issue's article. Our Historic Preservation Foundation is collecting funds for this project. We know this will require a significant effort to raise the necessary amount.

So, to that end, I have a couple of suggestions.

One is please direct your contributions to the Preservation Foundation. It will be the source of funding for the fence. Second, if you haven't made a donation but have thought about it, or, thought about significantly increasing your donation for a worthy result, this is the time. Oak Hill Cemetery and the entire community will benefit by preserving this historic fence that "gives the street elegance and a sense of permanence," just as Mrs. Steele wrote.

As always, come visit!!!!



Abraham Meija and Rico Harajula at the newest path they created near 28th Street



President's Report (continued from page 1)

prospective donors.

The construction of new inurnment boxes along the sides of the steps above the Carriage House, about which I began writing in September, continues. This is a labor-intensive project requiring expert masonry, and we are very pleased with the design and construction. We expect that this project will come to a conclusion in the next few weeks, with landscaping design to follow. After completion, we will consider repairing and reconfiguring the concrete pad around the Carriage House. This pad shows settlement and cracking, and it would be best to eliminate water penetration on the hillside as much as possible. The area could also stand some screening and beautification, to mask the equipment and materials necessary to maintain the grounds.

The past two months our employees, especially Rico Harajula and Abraham Meija, have worked the fence line and pathways between the gatehouse and North Hill. Brian Williamson, Jose Guzman, Mainor Pinor-Torres and Jorge Robles, who was rehired a few days ago, are maintaining and improving this landscape. Headstones and lot markers have been aligned and straightened, with flowers planted. We thank them for their creativity and hard work. As we will be looking to repave the nearby road, we need to design drainage and curbing. As we wish to improve access for our small vehicles along one or two of those pathways, we are widening, adding gutters, contouring the ground, and seeding and sodding. Other paths are being reset, with steps added. Lorton Stone will begin work now on repairing a section of the rubble stone wall that separates us from Montrose Park. The fence will be repaired, and trees and vines are being trimmed. These improvements will in the future allow us to add new burial space in pathways, or in new cremation boxes along the sides of those pathways.

Further back along that fence, and over the hill toward Rock Creek, the Linthicum Mausoleum continues to deteriorate. We are considering dis-

mantling the structure so that it no longer poses a threat to staff or visitors. Your thoughts are welcome.

After a delay of several months we have begun the excavation and construction of a large concrete pad in the main intersection of Central Avenue. The pad is necessary to change out our waste containers, which are used during construction or seasonally for leaf and grass disposal. Sometimes there are too many to store at the carriage house, and changing a full for an empty requires room to maneuver, so the pad is necessary. We are attempting to minimize the visual impact of this new installation. While the Metro Paving crew is here, we will install curbing in that intersection and elsewhere, improve several drainage inlets and exploring what lies beneath the road surface. So far we have not found cobbled roads, but we have just begun.

Three existing pathways have been rebuilt to enable burials, one near the 28th Street gate, and two near the gatehouse. We will work to make them attractive additions to our inventory of burial space.

Some work has begun on the gatehouse. The foundations have been examined, and some repair and reinforcement is necessary. The mudroom shed at the rear of the house is rotting, and needs to be replaced. Outerbridge Horsey has finished the measured drawings, permits are being secured, and construction should be underway soon. Plans for improving the kitchen and a bathroom are also moving along. We appreciate the patience of Dave and Darla Jackson during these renovations.

A few weeks ago, I had the pleasure of traveling to Germany and Austria. Again, I tried to incorporate visits to several cemeteries, and visited three in Salzburg, Vienna and Munich, as well as the Imperial Crypt in Vienna. I remain convinced that Oak Hill is one of the world's most beautiful. Spring shows us at our best, so please visit soon.

George G. Hill
President

The Tall Iron Fence Along R Street

A Continuation From Our Last Newsletter

In our last newsletter, we wrote about the history, grandeur, and importance of our tall fence along "R" Street. If you remember, our fence resembles the fence at the entry to Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, MA. Mount Auburn is the first of the "garden" movement of cemeteries in the 19th century. It, too, is one of the pre-eminent resting places in America. Much has been written about the beauty, the landscape, and the magnificence of that cemetery, including its many significant

monuments and mausoleums.

The Oak Hill Cemetery Board of Managers wishes to undertake a project to restore our iron fence because the 150 year-old structure has reached the point where merely repairing and painting will not avoid eventual collapse. In the past, portions of the fence were knocked over by automobiles or trees and repaired. In recent years, however, parts of the fence have fallen over because of the deterioration of the structure at a post or supporting top or bot-

tom rail. Here are pictures of a recent failure. *Picture A*

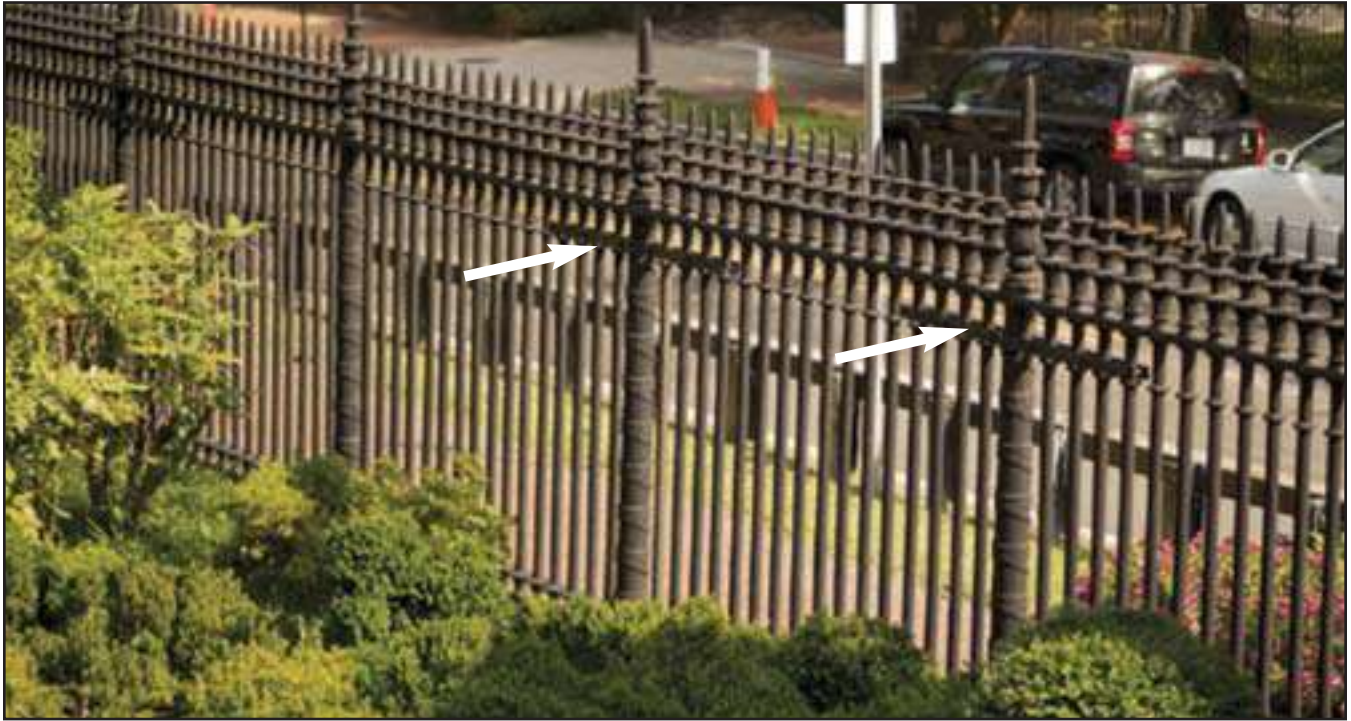
Steel "braces" were recently installed to add support along nearly one-half of the fence posts. *Picture B*

In short, the problem is rust, or oxidation, developed in pockets and crevices which turned what was formerly cast iron into nothing but rust. The fence was painted numerous times but now the oxidation is so pervasive that it is beginning to overcome the structure. Without exception, every contractor and preservation consultant has concluded that full restoration is needed to preserve the fence. Here are some pictures of the conditions commonly found along our iron fence. *Pictures C, D, E.*

What is restoration? A process to dismantle the fence and remove it, replace the parts that are consumed with rust, remove the old paint from the remainder, repair damaged areas in the remaining iron, apply a new coating system of paint, and then reassemble the new fence on new bases back in its original location. Each step requires extensive study as to its own best practice and the balance between structural soundness and cost effectiveness. For a thorough discussion of all the



Picture A: A section of iron fence collapsed in 2015



elements relating to cast iron preservation, maintenance and repair, look at the National Park Service Preservation Brief #27 "The Maintenance and Care of Architectural Cast Iron" by John G. Waite, AIA.

Since our last report, several of the preliminary steps have been taken to eventually restore our iron fence. Last summer every member of the Oak Hill Cemetery Board of Managers and the Superintendent traveled to visit Mount Auburn Cemetery. The primary reason for the trip was to see their newly restored iron fence and meet the Mount Auburn officials and contractor involved with the project. We spent the morning touring with Mount Auburn President Dr. David Barnett. He graciously walked the group around a large portion of the 175 acres of Mount Auburn where he showed examples of various "best practices" they developed for a variety of issues. It was a terrifically informative tour for everyone in our group.

Later in the day, we met with Mount Auburn VP Gus Fraser who is in charge of their facilities

Picture B: Steel Braces along R Street

maintenance and construction. We also met with Vincent Cassidy of Cassidy Bros. Foundry, the contractor who restored their iron fence. There was a lively discussion about various options to perform parts of the project like disassembly, the paint system, documents for permits, and transportation. The more we talked, the more the complexity of the project became apparent. The meeting went on for two hours, capped by a walking tour of the fence. The original color of their fence was replicated with what the contractor called "Mount Auburn Green," a very deep, deep hue that looks black until it is closely examined. The parts of the fence, posts, pickets, finials, rails, and decoration, were all gleaming and shiny on a sunlit afternoon. Everyone felt it was a privilege to see the restored fence and appreciated the steps to its full restoration.

Following the trip, our Board of Managers and Superintendent decided that the iron fence restoration project at Oak Hill should be done in at least



Picture C: Oxidation attaching the top rail and pinial

two phases. Phase one will be a project that restores two sections of the fence. The first phase will enable us to determine the right way to restore our fence and give us an attractive example to assist with raising the necessary funds. Three iron contractors were asked for proposals and all responded, with three different approaches to doing the work and three different costs. The variations were broad. Interviewing the contractors didn't solve the mystery to the satisfaction of the board. The next step was to enlist professional assistance to help us sort through the options. Three different restoration consultants

were contacted. They were asked for a proposal to work out the



Picture D. Primer and rust showing near a deteriorated base

"best practices" for our project during phase one and then write the resulting specification to complete phase two. Phase two

is restoring the remaining 78 sections of the fence.

In late 2016, L. Richard Fischer, Vice President of the Oak Hill Cemetery Historic Preservation Foundation made a significant donation to pay for Phase One of the iron fence restoration. In addition, George Hill, President of the Cemetery Board and the Preservation Foundation committed to pay for the first fence section that will be done as Phase Two of the project, another significant donation.

These very generous gentlemen have given us the much needed momentum to move out on this very important project.

Two proposals from consultants to help us with phase one of the project were received in February. At this time, we are reviewing the proposals and will make a selection, shortly. We anticipate Phase One of the Iron Fence Restoration Project will begin in 2017 and be complete by year-end.



Picture E: The post finial connection completely failed



News from the Oak Hill Cemetery Historic Preservation Foundation

by Liz Mizell, Development Director

Our History, Our Future

As we start to think about the future of the Oak Hill Cemetery Historic Preservation Foundation --- it is important that we pause and remember those that have already contributed. Whether you have given to the Oak Hill Cemetery Company through continued volunteerism or a financial contribution to one of our funds, thank you for being part of our story.

The history of the Oak Hill Cemetery Historic Preservation Foundation is in many ways reflective of the cemetery and Georgetown community it was created to serve. The Oak Hill Cemetery Historic Preservation Foundation was created to support the ongoing maintenance, restoration and beautification of the Oak Hill Cemetery. Although the Foundation was established in September 2008, progression was slow.

In Summer of 2016, the Board of Directors was formed to lead the Foundation. After guidance from Lynn O'Connell, a nonprofit consultant; the Executive Director and Board of Directors hired a Director of Development, Elizabeth "Liz" Mizell. The fundraising efforts are well underway. Liz is constructing a thorough list of past contributors to both the Oak Hill Cemetery and the Oak Hill Cemetery Historic Preservation Foundation. In addition to past contributors, Liz is creating a list of prospective individual donors, private family foundations and corporations. This research and gathering process is the initial phase of the fundraising plan for the Foundation. Knowing where the Foundation currently stands in terms of past 'gifts' is key to cultivating future funding streams.

To begin to identify needs and fulfill the Foundation's mis-

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Vice President*

Judi Cochran, Treasurer

*Darla Pozell Jackson,
Secretary*

Marisa Bourgoïn

Mimsy Lindner

Clift "Andy" Seferlis

sion, Dave and Liz have constructed a list of some significant historic projects that are in need of preservation. These include: Tall Iron Fence Along R Street, Van Ness Mausoleum, Linthicum-Dent Mausoleum, Fowler Monument, Corcoran Mausoleum, John H. Payne Ellipse Sculpture, William Pinkney Ellipse Sculpture, and Road Restoration. Currently, Liz is creating a synopsis for each of these historic projects. Each project has distinctive restoration needs and these will be outlined in each synopsis.

Tall Iron Fence Along R Street

Please see article elsewhere in this newsletter that reports on the condition of the fence and the steps being taken towards its restoration.

Monument Restoration Program

The Monument Restoration Program is an ongoing preservation task. For example, former Superintendent Joe Pozell asked Mark Sanders of Lorton Stone to restore two monuments of some significance. An angel seen from 28th street was known to neighborhood children as "Dorothy." The angel and another monument on the Finley lot had been damaged by vandals. The only Terra Cotta monument in our cemetery, remembers an infant child of Robert and Mary Fugitt who was buried in Chapel Valley in 1869. The figure of a kneeling child was in pieces, missing its base and other parts of the sculpture. Mark Sanders was able to restore the Terra Cotta monument by reassembling the broken pieces and recasting the missing portions. Mark repaired the monument stones for Dorothy and her parents as well.

Kline Memorials has created a survey of several monuments that must be reset. They have been in for three days using a boom truck and other equipment to repair some monuments. There are many monuments left to repair, photographs of the progress are on the right.

Our bylaws make monument repairs the responsibility of the lot holders. Despite the reluctance of some lot owners to repair their family monuments, some stones must be reset because they are a safety hazard or they were pushed over by erosion.



*Above:
Connell Monument
Stone, Lot 508E, the
monument stone fallen
over; headstone completely
detached from base.*



*Right:
Connell Monument
stone fully repaired and
upright*



*Left:
The front of the Maud
Connell monument that
had been facing the
ground.*



John Parish and Zlati Dimitriov of Kline Memorials using their boom truck to reset the Elliot Family stone

The Foundation is funding the Monument Restoration Program; if you are interested in



The Dorothy figure repaired by Mark Sanders

supporting the Monument Restoration Program, please reach out to Liz Mizell. (202) 337-2895.

Grant Reporting

The DC Preservation League grant execution is well underway. The Oak Hill Cemetery Historic Preservation Foundation was awarded \$10,000 on June 1, 2016. This grant was written and submitted by Darla Jackson with the purpose to complete measured drawings of the Oak Hill Cemetery Historic Gatehouse that was built to be the Superintendent's residence. These drawings will provide a record and basis for future work on the superintendent's house and office space as well as its historic presence in the community. In October 2016, Outerbridge Horsey Consultants completed their first round of drawings. The completion of the grant reporting is due June 1, 2017.

Upcoming Event

Our Historic Preservation Foundation is planning to host an educational event sometime this fall. Watch for this event..... more information to come....



The Terre Cotta Kneeling Child repaired by Mark Sanders

Contributors to Oak Hill

October 1, 2016 - May 1, 2017

We thank all our contributors for their support.

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Paul B. Cromelin, Jr.
Mr. Bradley N. Currey Jr. in
memory of
Burdette C. Nicholls and
Louise Nicholls
Mr. Donald L. David for Mom
Ms. Vita Hollander in memory
of Louise and
Burdette Nicholls
Mr. Michael J. O'Brien in
memory of
Wm H. Magruder and
Maria A. Ellis
Ms. Frances Jean Santucci in
memory of my parents,
John and Helen Ash
Ms. Katherine Webb in memo-
ry of Richard Watkins
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