



OAK HILL CEMETERY

Historic Preservation
Foundation

OAK HILL CEMETERY

3001 R Street, NW
Washington, DC 20007
Telephone: 202-337-2835
Fax: 202-337-6481
www.oakhillcemeterydc.org
Email: info@oakhillcemeterydc.org

Cemetery Hours

Office and Grounds:
M - F 9:00 am - 4:30 pm
Saturday 11:00 am - 4:00 pm
Sunday 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm
(Weekends and holidays walk-in gate only,
no drive-in access. Gates will close, weather
permitting. Please observe visiting tips at
front entrance)

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From the President by George G. Hill

Dear Friends of Oak Hill,

A beautiful Spring has arrived again, after a seemingly long winter of cold and wet. You may be reassured that Oak Hill Cemetery is making steady progress. Paul Williams is settling into his job as the new Superintendent. He brings extensive experience, as he was the Superintendent at Congressional Cemetery on Capitol Hill, and the transition has been remarkably smooth. Paul seems happy in his new position, and he and Greg in their new home. Oak Hill was not significantly distracted by this transition, which led to continued efficiency in operations. Paul has been remarkable busy with more than 30 funerals since starting in October, and the cemetery is on track for the busiest interment year in recent history. Fortunately, few have been related to Covid. One effect of the pandemic has been that it has led families to plan for the purchase of burial lots or to think about such preparations. Our prayers go to all who have been injured or suffered losses during the pandemic. We have remained available as a community resource, both as an operating cemetery and as an historic garden landscape for everyone to visit. Some of our employees experienced Covid illness, fortunately not with severe symptoms, and have recovered completely, we believe.

We can report that Dave and Darla Jackson are happy in their new home in Alabama. They and Ella Pozell were very helpful in the transition to our new Superintendent. We thank them all.

This letter is written in the last few days of March. Metro Paving has recently completed the rebuilding of the road behind the Chapel. The new road, granite curb on both sides, and a rebuilt cobblestone gutter on the Chapel side, extends from the "R" Street Fence down behind the Chapel, all the way to the main intersection. The road is built on a deep new base, reinforced with "Geogrid" stabilization fabric, and behind the joints in the granite curb are "kickers" (concrete supports). The road was rebuilt to the highest standards and the quality of work is excellent. It will last for many decades. Some of the granite was removed from a project near the Kennedy Center, some was newly purchased. Thanks to Manny Rodrigues and his skilled crew. Please come to see it. The area will be landscaped and seeded as soon as possible. Monuments on both sides of the road have been and will be reset. In the next few days Metro will return to begin another project at the 28th Street gate. We will narrow and rebuild the road at the entrance there, install new curbs, improve gutters and drains, and install as many as 22 new double deep casket sites and possibly additional cremation sites. We will report on this as work proceeds.

Just below and parallel to this road work, Scott and Jorge with Jose and Abraham, have contoured the soil, trimmed trees, "burlapped" and seeded, laid new irrigation lines, set new or repaired hydrants, and more. Rico and Ernesto have repaired numerous monuments, reset on new

continues on page 2

From the President *continued*

foundations, re-laid two additional long paths, and laid drainage pipes that cover all of Chapel Valley. All of this since last August! The quality of the men's work is gratifying, and we are very proud of them all. When the materials arrive, Rico and Ernesto will extend the "India" black granite path that runs past the new Biddle Mausoleum another two hundred feet further into Chapel Valley. In this area and all over the Cemetery, we have trimmed many trees and removed many non-native species. We hope to add new trees soon. Thanks to Mark Mehnert for all of his work.

This Chapel Valley area has been undergoing reconstruction for many months. We apologize for those inconvenienced or distraught by this disruption. We expect that it too will soon be especially beautiful and worth the wait. We thank you for your patience.

In the office, our bookkeeping systems have been updated and moved to the "cloud". Our financial records are now maintained by Andrea McCants, our consulting bookkeeper. The cemetery records have been updated for recent burials, and Scott Staples has managed an extensive update of our main map.

The gatehouse interior was completely repainted for Paul and Greg. Their garden patio was also repaved with the original bricks. This was done to drain rain away from the foundation and protect this historic structure. There is still some foundation work to be done.

We have now finished the repair and installation of seven sections of the historic Bigelow Iron Fence along "R" Street. As I write, Lorton Stone and Krug and Sons are installing the next five sections. When finished, they will remove the seven sections west of the Gatehouse for repair. The pandemic has certainly slowed this project, with material, labor and transportation issues. We hope the next sections will not take as long. Each section will cost about \$25,000. Please help!

Our finances are strong: We have benefitted from a diversified investment portfolio, generous donors, and very strong demand for burial and cremation spaces. Several mausoleum sites have been sold, we are attempting to create additional sites due to increased interest. We did have a very positive financial year despite the terrible pandemic and not because of it. We thank all of you who share our vision of Oak Hill Cemetery as an eternal home for our friends and relatives and as a resource for our neighbors and community.

Please come visit us during this most beautiful season.

Thank you,



George G. Hill, President
Oak Hill Cemetery Historic Preservation Foundation

OAK HILL CEMETERY

Historic Preservation Foundation Newsletter



Superintendent's Letter by Paul K. Williams

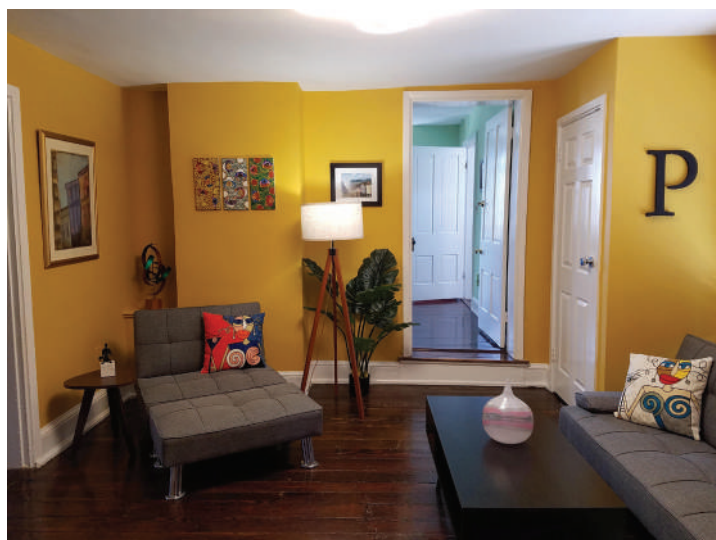
Having run Congressional Cemetery on Capitol Hill for the past ten years, I would meet occasionally with the former Superintendent David Jackson for lunch to share common problems, solutions, and to both of us to act as sounding boards. We toured each other's cemeteries, and I will admit I was envious that Dave and his wife Darla were 'required' to reside in the historic gatehouse at the entrance. While I adored my staff and the job at Congressional, I felt it was time for a new set of eyes. Imagine my delight when Dave called and informed me he was retiring, and asked where they should advertise his position.

After the interview process and I was offered the position of Superintendent, we had a months long overlap period to ensure a smooth transition for both cemeteries which worked out very well. My husband Greg and I and our two cats moved into the gatehouse on October 20th. Like any change of residency in an old house, the move in and out provided opportunities for repairs and a fresh coat of paint. Our contractor Carlos was nearly in residence as he and his employee repaired plaster walls, ceilings, and painted the entire interior, taking advantage of us living out of boxes

that only amounted to a one-bedroom apartment of furnishings.

Graciously and most importantly, Dave and Darla gifted to the cemetery most of the large furniture that will remain in the gatehouse for generations to come, like the dining room table set and the china cabinet that have both been here for some time. The dining room table was large enough to host 16 of my family members for Thanksgiving that were excited to visit the house and Georgetown toward the end of the long pandemic. The two middle aged cat brothers have enjoyed the three bedroom, three story house and have actually lost a pound or two with the dual stairs being both a new form of entertainment and exercise.

We've had the brick side yard patio re-laid to deflect water away from the backyard and house, installed a new basement door, and removed overgrowth in the back yard to let sunlight blanket the grassy area. More importantly, but less fun, we are having a collapsed section of the foundation restored in a crawlspace below the dining room that will ensure the integrity of the structure for decades to come.



A fresh coat of paint.



Williams Family Thanksgiving 2021 at Oak Hill Cemetery



OAK HILL CEMETERY

Historic Preservation Foundation Newsletter

Greg is a self-employed journalist and is enjoying the view from the third floor bedroom/office. He is careful to schedule zoom interviews at 15 minutes past the hour, lest the hourly bell tolls during his interviews. We are also getting to know the many excellent Georgetown restaurants and businesses. Greg and the cats will soon decamp to our sailboat named the "Bumpy Night" which is in a slip in the Canton neighborhood of Baltimore for easy access to sailing on the Chesapeake Bay. I'll join them for any weekends I can.

We had a slight personnel change here in the office, with Laura Hackfeld moving to a full time job Monday through Friday so she can get her weekends off after a year or so working here. We plan on submitting a proposal to Arcadia publishing for a history book on the cemetery. We also hired local history buff Laura Thoms to be the weekend host, who is very familiar with the grounds and our 'permanent residents.'

Our PPP loan was forgiven, and our site sales remain strong. The crew has developed many new areas for cremation and casket sites using creative and innovative methods to literally create new real estate. Slightly narrowing and repaving the 28th Street gate area, for example, has permitted the installation of 22 double deep casket vaults that will be ready for sale early this summer.

I am certainly not taking for granted being able to live and work in such a historic, bucolic space. I'll begin my summer by gently cleaning a few of our prominent headstones to immerse myself with a few of our fellow residents.

— Paul K. Williams



...the brick side yard patio re-laid...



"String lights on a spring night..."



28th Street Gate Expansion and Casket Vault Installation.



Oak Hill Cemetery from Rock Creek Park.

OAK HILL CEMETERY
Historic Preservation Foundation Newsletter



From the Lens of the Superintendent

Photography by Paul K. Williams





OAK HILL CEMETERY Historic Preservation Foundation Newsletter

Grounds Update Spring 2022 by Scott Staples

If you're reading this, then you are officially a friend of The Oak Hill Cemetery and we'd like to thank you. Thank you for caring about a special place and your loved ones.

Here's what we've been up to. We have just finished the cleanup and processing of all of our autumn leaves, which will be used to mulch shrub beds. If you've visited recently, you will have seen that Oak Hill is undergoing some major improvements. Sometimes I think of our cemetery as a 170 year-old mansion that needs the paint scraped off before repainting, or like a classic car that's undergoing a rolling restoration.

We've had an almost endless succession of heavy equipment and contractors, dumpsters, and piles of soil, and we're not done yet.

We've repaved, edged, and reinforced the curving road that runs between Chapel Hill and Chapel Valley. Thank you to the skilled and conscientious team from Metro Paving and especially the excavator operator who did such an amazing and delicate job of grading the slope so beautifully to get it ready for us to green up with grass, which we are doing right now. You can tell a great contractor by the work they do and how they leave the site. It's a reminder of how nice it is to have good quality friends like Manny and the entire professional team at Metro Paving. The stone crew has been busy removing crumbling asphalt from paths, restoring the drainage system and installing new gutters, reassembling flagstone paths that were sliding downhill, and restoring and leveling gravestones, while the grounds crew has been busy restoring slopes, greening up after



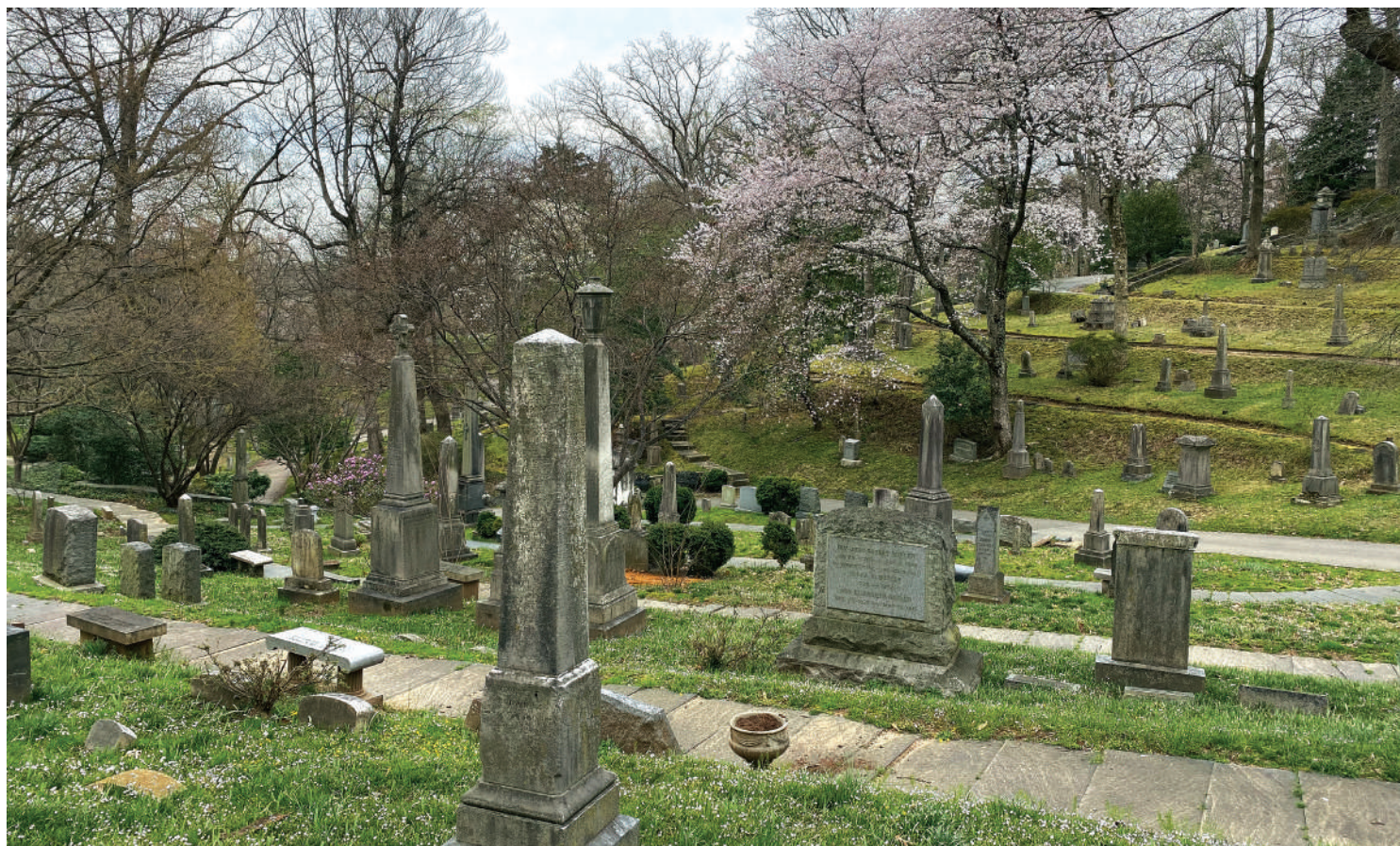
renovations, removing concrete paths, and keeping up with the almost never-ending grass cutting, leaf removal, and general cleanup here at Oak Hill.

We are also redoing the back garden along R Street, and shocked a neighbor across the street with the removal of the failing Leyland cypresses. We'll be replacing the old hedge with new plant material with more plasticity (the ability to be cut back and regrow) than the Leylands.

We are still refining our techniques for restoration of our many slopes. One of the main problems at the cemetery is our large, unsustainable deer population. Twenty-three acres is not adequate for twenty-seven deer (the most I've counted at one time). While picturesque, the deer pressure is extremely hard on our historic landscape and its curves and terraces. It isn't just that they eat plants and mutilate shrubs, or that they can permanently disfigure a small tree by rubbing it with their antlers. The main problem is that their hooves are like buck teeth taking bites out of our landscape, leaving

OAK HILL CEMETERY

Historic Preservation Foundation Newsletter



holes that cause further erosion. Eventually, Oak Hill will need to be fenced for deer, which will require funding. In the meantime, we will be installing more aesthetic fencing of our trees, painted black, tapering to the base, with the crossbars up to the height of deer browsing, as seen at English deer parks to prevent deer from damaging smaller trees.

One of our goals here is to manage the carbon and nitrogen cycles wisely. The grass is already mulched as we cut (the only bagging we do is on the formal Ellipse) and with the acquisition of our new leaf mulcher, we are well on our way to closing the loop. We are ironing out our process for generating leaf mulch and incorporating it into the beds and lawns. What's needed next is to acquire a small chipper for branches, which we hope to do this year. We are also continuing our contouring, tamping, and top-dressing improvement plans

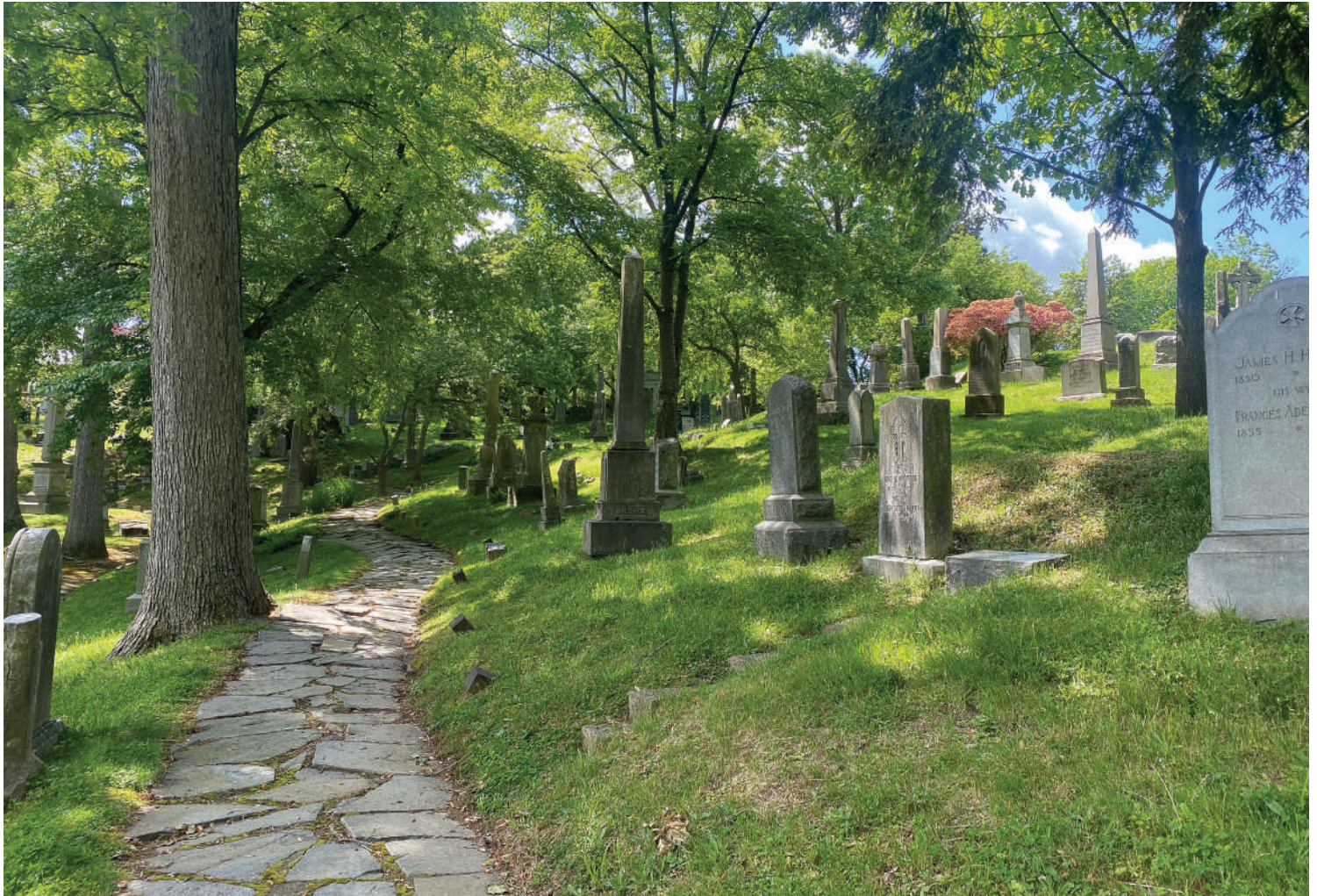
for turf areas, and we're looking to buy a powered lawn roller.

One of our major projects for the future is restoring the tree canopy of the cemetery and the wilderness that slopes down to Rock Creek, as well as riparian restoration of our Rock Creek shoreline. For the tree planting of the main grounds, we will survey the existing canopy, calculate the tree-carrying capacity of the property, and then map out the future proposed canopy. We will over-plant initially and then create a plan for periodic culling of the weakest and least attractive specimens. The spacing of individual trees in the canopy is crucial. They should be close enough together that they protect and shield each other but not so close that the loss of an individual tree would leave the remaining trees unsightly.



OAK HILL CEMETERY

Historic Preservation Foundation Newsletter



Our plan is to do a full restoration and reforestation of the wilderness sloping down to Rock Creek using the Miyawaki reforestation technique, which is a methodology for creating a maintenance-free, wild and native, mixed, multilayer, evergreen and deciduous forest by densely planting native species. We will start by clearing out the invasive and undesirable species. Then we will create a planting plan of desirable native species with 40 to 50% standard size trees, 15 to 20% large forest trees, 25 to 30% small understory trees, and 8 to 12% shrubs, with the percentage of evergreen species from 2% to 20%.

Once all the inputs are in place, the area is kept mulched (with leaf mulch), fenced, and weeded for the first three years, after which point the system is left alone to establish an ecosystem. The benefits of restoring our wilderness will be noise reduction, habitat restoration, and the innumerable aesthetic and psychological benefits of nature.

We are also continuing to restore and add to our waterlines and hose spigots, installing wine barrels, pigtails, splitters and hoses at each hydrant. Another of our major goals is to get our maps, photographs, and digital assets organized for ease of access and use.

OAK HILL CEMETERY

Historic Preservation Foundation Newsletter



I would like to thank our great team of conscientious and skilled professionals here, from the members of the board who graciously volunteer their time and extremely valuable expertise, and our many contractors, suppliers, and service providers. I'd like to especially thank our small and very skilled and dedicated team of grounds keepers and stone masons who keep the landscape looking as nice as it does.

Thank you to all of you who care about and donate to Oak Hill. If you're not already doing so and would like to contribute financially we would certainly appreciate and spend wisely any donation you make.

We can always use more funding for plants (we would love to replant slopes with spiraea) and trees, for the restoration of the cast iron fence as well as equipment purchases (a lawn roller, a new hydraulic mower, and a branch chipper). There's also always more tree work that needs to be done (which is quite expensive, but essential to the continuing health, safety, and beauty of the cemetery).

We can also use volunteer help on the grounds. We are particularly looking for fit nature-loving people for restoring and replanting the wilderness that runs along Rock Creek. If you are interested and would like to be involved, you can call or drop



OAK HILL CEMETERY

Historic Preservation Foundation Newsletter



by the office, or email me at Groundsmanager@oakhillcemeterydc.org with your contact details and perhaps indicate some areas of interest to you. Please put "VOLUNTEER" in the subject line. We have plenty of projects that may interest you, suitable for many levels of gardening ability and activity level, from general gardening to research and possibly giving tours.

We do have a limited inventory of sites for sale, from very modest to quite grand. While we are a historic cemetery, we are also a living cemetery. It breaks my heart when we have an open house and

someone tells me "It's so beautiful here, too bad you don't have any space!" So if you or someone you know might be interested, please do visit the office for a price list or make an appointment with the Superintendent to view our available options.

To ensure the long-term preservation of the cemetery, we have also set up a Preservation Fund for when the cemetery does run out of space and we would welcome your help in achieving our goal of ensuring the continuing health of the cemetery for the next 170 years.



Join us in celebrating and honoring our neighbors at the Historic Mt. Zion and Female Union Band Society Cemeteries.

Alliance for New Music Theatre joined in partnership with Mt. Zion – Female Union Band Historical Park, Inc., to create ***Voices of Zion***, an original work and immersive music-theatre experience commemorating the two adjacent Black cemeteries in Georgetown, an in honor of the Sestercentennial (250th anniversary) of Dumbarton United Methodist Church and just over the 200th anniversary of Mt. Zion United Methodist Church, the area's oldest African-American Congregation.

Joining this celebration and in support of DC statehood, Quilts4DC will offer a special quilting exhibition in the lobby during the performances. On-location performances in Georgetown each weekend in May leading to a special final Memorial Day Celebration.

As this is intended to be an immersive experience in the cemeteries and includes a 15-minutes walk through Georgetown to Dumbarton Church, please wear practical shoes.

ALLIANCE FOR NEW MUSIC-THEATRE and
MT. ZION – FEMALE UNION BAND SOCIETY HISTORIC
MEMORIAL PARK, Inc.
present:



*Voices
of
Zion*

Saturday, April 16 at THEARC:
Special Preview Performance Celebrating DC Emancipation Day
May 6, 7, 13, 14, 20, 21, 30 on Location in Georgetown

DIG DEEPER
NEWMUSICTHEATRE.ORG/VOICESOFZION
BLACKGEORGETOWN.ORG



OAK HILL CEMETERY Historic Preservation Foundation Newsletter

Annual Report 2021

The Oak Hill Cemetery and the Oak Hill Cemetery Historic Preservation Foundation are honored to recognize all of the individuals, foundations and organizations who generously support our important work. Below is a list of Annual Donors whose gifts were received from January 1 – December 31, 2021.

The 1849 Oak Hill Society

Members of our exclusive 1849 Oak Hill Society have earned membership by generously including Oak Hill's Historic Preservation Foundation as a beneficiary of their estate plan.

Mr. L. Richard Fischer, Esq.
Mr. Dale Haworth and Mrs. Karen F. Beall
Mrs. David Springer Brown
Mr. Marc E. Nicholson
Mrs. Dorothy Zaring

Renwick Circle (\$10,000+)

James Renwick, Jr., architect of the Smithsonian Building and the original Corcoran Gallery (now the Renwick Gallery) and St. Patrick's in New York City, also designed the iron enclosure and the Gothic Chapel located on the south end of the cemetery's ellipse.

Mr. Albert and Mrs. Forree Biddle, III,
in honor of David W. Jackson
Mr. and Mrs. Mario H. Boiardi
Mrs. David Springer Brown, *in memory of*
Dr. David Springer Brown
Mr. and Mrs. John Gill
Mr. and Mrs. T. Nicholas Gill
Ms. Gill and Ms. Hartley
Mrs. Lillian Peeler
Mr. Roger W. Sant and Mrs. Doris Matsui
Mr. and Mrs. David Schaae
The Alisann and Terry Collins Foundation
The Estate of Louis Krach
The Sachiko Kuno Foundation

de la Roche Circle (\$5,000+)

Captain George F. de la Roche, a master engineer, was tasked with supervising the original plotting and grading of Oak Hill as well as the creation of a grand bank along Rock Creek.

Anonymous
Mr. Marc E. Nicholson
Ms. Barbara C. Teele, *in memory of*
Robert A. Mangrum

Rock of Dumbarton Circle (\$2,500+)

Adjacent to the original Parrot's Woods, the Rock of Dumbarton was another of the original land parcels at the heart of Oak Hill.

Mr. George W. and Mrs. Amy Ford, III,
in memory of James and Eleanor Johnston, Eleanor Ford
Mr. I. Guyman Martin, III

Parrot's Woods Circle (\$1,000+)

Named for one of the original land parcels comprising Oak Hill.

Mr. Albert and Mrs. Foree Biddle, III,
in memory of Lucas Kaempfer and Philip Savopoulos
Mrs. Elizabeth Bonner
Mrs. Margaret Cantlin-Kern, *in memory of*
John W. Kern, III

Mrs. Martha Carr, *in honor of*
Richard Barr
Mrs. Hwa Kyung Cha, *in memory of*
Chungsuk Cha
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Mr. Timothy Curtis and
Mrs. Loretta Castaldi
Mr. and Mrs. Terry Eakin, III,
in memory of Lucas Kaempfer
Mrs. Elizabeth W. Edgeworth
Mrs. Susanne and Mr. Richard Francoeur,
in memory of Richard Francoeur
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Mr. John F. Jameson
Mr. Lee Jameson
Mr. Ted J. Just
Mr. and Mrs. Edward R. Leahy
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Robert E. McCullough
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Mr. Dudley and Mrs. Jennifer Winthrop
Mr. Eric Wolman
Mr. Robert Woolfit

OAK HILL CEMETERY

Historic Preservation Foundation Newsletter



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The Crocker Family Charitable Foundation
The Donohue Family Foundation, Inc.
The Green Hill Foundation
The Lindner Family Foundation, Inc.
The John R. and Carolyn J. Maness Family Foundation, Inc.
The Neel Foundation

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Mr. John Dalessio
Mr. and Mrs. Joe Davis



OAK HILL CEMETERY

Historic Preservation Foundation Newsletter

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Mr. Johnston, III
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OAK HILL CEMETERY

Historic Preservation Foundation Newsletter



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The Green Hill Foundation
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If you notice an omission or oversight, please bring this to the attention of Laura Hackfeld, Office Manager and Director of Social Media, and she will be happy to work with you to address it.



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Historic Preservation Foundation

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The Oak Hill Cemetery was honored to welcome a delegation from the Slovakian Embassy consisting of Ambassador Peter Kmec (pictured above), Foreign Minister Ivan Korcok and Defense Minister Jaroslav Nad (pictured at right) this past February. They laid flowers and paid respects at the graveside of Stefan Osusky, a co-founder and former diplomatic representative of Czechoslovakia. Thank you for your visit!

