



OAK HILL CEMETERY

Historic Preservation
Foundation

OAK HILL CEMETERY

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Washington, DC 20007-2923
Telephone: 202-337-2835
Fax: 202-337-6481
www.oakhillcemeterydc.org
Email: info@oakhillcemeterydc.org

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.

Oak Hill Cemetery Historic Preservation Foundation Board of Directors

George G. Hill, President
L. Richard Fischer, Vice President
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and Foundation Operations
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Oak Hill Cemetery Board of Managers

George G. Hill, President
David C. de Vicq, Vice President
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From the President

Dear Friends of Oak Hill,

At the end of April, Oak Hill completed 170 years serving its community. We enter the next decade in good condition, our staff in good health, with our grounds in attractive condition, our finances strong, and our mission clear. We have made good progress on all fronts with the remaining challenges clearly understood. With the return of Abraham Mejia to our landscape crew, with Scott Staples, our grounds manager, understanding better the annual cycle of work at Oak Hill, and with the support of our Boards, staff and interns, we have tackled new projects and completed many.

One year ago, we were still picking up after the early March windstorm, and the late March snows. Ricardo Araujo and Ernesto Torres had finished the stonework at the water spigot by the Carriage House, and were working the long path east from there, resetting the pathway, installing new gutter, and re-erecting fallen monuments. Drainage west of the Carriage House was improved, and erosion mitigated; Scott replanted that especially steep area. Over the next few weeks, the path below the Linthicum-Dent Mausoleum was repaired, drainage added, and multiple monuments repaired. In June they turned to Greeves Circle, adding a granite gutter, resetting stones, and creating new burial spaces. The land was regraded, seeded and sodded. It looks beautiful. Scott, Abraham, Jose Guzman and Jorge Robles are maintaining these areas with many years of acquired skill.

The summer was difficult at Oak Hill: either temperatures were high, or the rain was falling. It was hard to keep up with grass mowing, and we fell behind. Some of this was out of our control, but we hope with the return of Abraham it will not happen again. We have had more rain so far this year than last at this same time, so promises will be hard to keep. Simultaneously, we dealt with several large tree falls and removal.

We did install and dedicate the new memorial stone for Judith Ellen Foster, and cleaned and rededicated the stone for William Tyler Page, both with generous support from the DC Daughters of the American Revolution. We thank them!

In August, Rico and Ernesto returned to North Hill. These two fine gentlemen surveyed the landscape and intelligently planned the sequence of repairs, sometimes with the help of David de Vicq. Their growing confidence and skill sets are inspiring. The wall along Montrose Park was rebuilt, drainage added, monuments reset and repaired, trees trimmed, and new burial options added. This project continued into December, aided by mild weather, and we sodded there a few days before Christmas. Afterwards, markers and monument foundations were installed on the paths. This newly rebuilt area is also very beautiful and must be seen. More work followed just lower on that hillside, with new underground pipe laid to drain the half dozen newly restored pathways.

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OAK HILL CEMETERY Historic Preservation Foundation Newsletter

Several dozen new casket and cremation burial sites have been created. This work was mostly completed in April, with more sod added on the pathways. So, success, after more than six months of difficult and strenuous work by our two talented masons, performed in house, and at a cost far less than had we contracted this project to an outside vendor. We are planning to have Metro Paving install curb stones in this area soon.

In February, we watched the installation of two sections of the newly restored Historic Bigelow Iron Fence at 29th and R Streets. The new piece of Vermont granite that serves as the base sits between two sections of repaired and painted cast iron. These sections served as test cases of what to expect, and how much it would cost, to repair the entire fence. We found the bases to be in better condition than expected, but greater work than foreseen on the cast iron. We will keep you informed on this important project.

Spring was especially beautiful this year, and many of the early blossoms and flowers lasted a long time. We hope you enjoyed them. More tree work was done, and many more monuments reset. In the middle of April, Rico and Ernesto set their sights on Middleton Circle, which lies above the Carriage House and a bit east. This "household tomb" is marked by a lovely obelisk, dating from the late nineteenth century. It dominates the circle just above the roadway. Many monuments there and nearby needed alignment and adjustment, the ground needed regrading, trees needed trimming, and new granite gutter was required. As with so many of these projects, the boundaries of work creep ever larger. Even the flowerpots were repaired, painted and planted. We plan to sod in the next few days.

Meanwhile, the day to day operations continue. Spring annuals are being planted, bushes and trees trimmed, grass mowed. The grass has been green and lush so far this year, but we have kept pace. It has been satisfying to have Abraham rejoin Scott, Jose, and Jorge. These four men make a great team, focused on the landscape.

We have been active socially as well. Oak Hill hosted its first and second "Dog Day(s)", at the demand of many neighbors. It was a great success. We have hosted and attended lectures, been active on social media, especially with the help of Lois Brown and Liz Mizell, hosted visits from the Russian and Slovak ambassadors, and more. A few months ago, I had the honor of attending a lecture at Georgetown University by George Saunders, author of "Lincoln in the Bardo" and had the great pleasure of sitting next to him at dinner afterwards. What a treat! More recently we were honored by the DC DAR for our work at Oak Hill. Thank you, ladies! Further, we have done good work organizing and strengthening the Historic Preservation Foundation. Financially, we had another year of surplus, and contributed to our endowment fund. We have almost finished major renovations to the kitchen, bathroom, mudroom and other areas of the Gatehouse.

It has been a busy year, but a strongly positive one for the beautiful Oak Hill Cemetery. It is an honor and a pleasure to work with Dave and Darla Jackson, with Lois Brown, with Liz Mizell, with Lou Krach on the weekends, with Dave de Vicq early in the mornings, and with all our owners, Board members, and neighbors. The generosity of our friends has been enormously helpful. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

George G. Hill



OAK HILL CEMETERY Historic Preservation Foundation Newsletter

Executive Director Report by Dave Jackson

I am writing this article as a combination of a report that was presented at the annual meeting in June and as an update on various things around the cemetery in July. It seems as though a lot is happening!

For those who are into such numbers, there were 46 interments in the last fiscal year ending April 30th. The number of interments is right on our average number from year to year. What is growing is the number of cremation interments. In the past year only 3 of the interments were casket interments. All others were cremation interments. This number, only 7%, seems very low but it reflects the growing trend at cemeteries across the country. The good news is that we have plenty of spaces available for both types of interments for future sales. I believe we will be selling new interment spaces for another 50 to 70 years, or more. A continuing challenge, however, is overcoming the impression from past years that we are full and have no space for sale. Please assist us by informing your friends who may be considering purchasing burial space that we have a wide range of burial options and prices.

Other news items include events, both past and upcoming. Our donor reception in June was a great success with many positive comments from everyone who attended. We will continue with that event, probably earlier in the year for 2020 so that everyone has a greater opportunity to see Oak Hill in full spring bloom. Upcoming events

are also in the wings with a book club starting in November as well as a volunteer opportunity to plant trees in November during a planting by the Casey Trees organization. This will be our second Casey Trees event. Both times we are adding about 24 new trees to the landscape at Oak Hill. Just think what these nearly 50 trees will add in the coming years!

Speaking of the trees we planted, you may have read cemeteries were newly eligible to receive a reduction in the storm water run-off fees we all pay for on our water bills. The expense to Oak Hill for 2019 was going to be around \$24,000 but due to the reduction for cemeteries passed by the city council our fee will be "only" \$4,000. The reduction was based in part on our planting new trees so the Casey Tree plantings in 2017 and again this year have played a major role in our obtaining the reduction. Many "thanks" to Casey Trees for providing the trees and oversight of their installation. If you would like to volunteer for the next planting on Saturday, November 16th, please see page eight for sign-up.

As has been reported in the past few years, we have asked our staff members to take on more responsibility for repair and restoration of many areas of the cemetery. **The pictures on the last page of this newsletter** tell a story where a monument that was erected decades ago was at risk of collapse because it was leaning precariously to one side. As you can see from the pictures, this is not a small monument, being 8-10

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feet in total height and made up of several very heavy pieces of granite stone. Working without power lifts or a crane (because there is not room for such equipment to operate at that site) Rico Araujo and Ernesto Torres dismantled the monument, took out the foundation and replaced it, and then reset the pieces of the monument back in place. The work is done with a tripod lifting device, chain fall, and men who are very well-trained and smart about how to use such equipment. The pictures show the before, the monument removed, and then the newly reset monument put back in its proper place and alignment. By the way, this is a notably sized monument not the only one that has been reset by Rico and Ernesto. As you travel around the cemetery, there are several areas where monuments have been reset, realigned, or rebuilt. We haven't reached all the ones that need this work but we now have in-house staff qualified and willing to do this very difficult and specialized work. Congratulations and many thanks to Rico and Ernesto for their work.

Treasurer Report by Loretta Castaldi

Oak Hill Cemetery is in stable financial condition. The Cemetery ended the fiscal year on April 30, 2019 with a positive net operating revenue and 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.

Thanks to the generosity of donors and positive net revenues for the fiscal year ending April 2019, Oak Hill Cemetery contributed the regularly scheduled, inflation adjusted installment to the reserve fund. The goal is to build the reserves to a level that will allow the cemetery to continue operation for at least a century after sales cease.

Funds were also used during the fiscal year for a multitude of special projects including: continuing the improvements on North Hill, using in-house staff, to restore and beautify the setting;

launching a new web site to improve the cemetery's online presence; upgrading the infrastructure in the historic gatehouse; and opening up 37 new burial sites

In the upcoming year, we will continue work on cemetery improvements and contribute to the capital reserve fund.



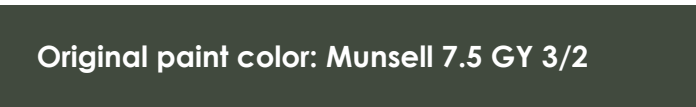
Bigelow Iron Fence Update

Phase one of the Bigelow Iron Fence restoration is complete except for the final coat of paint. We have submitted a plan to the Old Georgetown Board (OGB) to re-paint the fence the existing black color. However, based on the paint analysis on which we reported a year or so ago, the OGB wants to consider painting the fence the original color, its first coat. That original color was a fairly light yellow-green and would be a severe departure from the black that has been the color for over 100 years.

To see what the yellow-green will look like in contrast to the Senaca Red Sandstone, the OGB asked us to paint a section near the 28th Street gate. We are currently negotiating with a paint contractor to paint the iron gate at 28th Street and expect to have the project completed sometime in August.

Please come by, if you are in the area and look at the new color and give us your feedback. We would like to be able to present OGB with that feedback, particularly if the result is that our stake holders, being owners and friends of the cemetery, neighbors, and others who are interested, feel strongly one way or the other, yellow-green or black.

To provide your feedback, you can send an email to info@oakhillcemeterydc.org. Another way is to stop by the office and sign the list we will have there. A third way is to simply call us in the office at **202-337-2835**. Thank you for your interest.



Excellence in Community Service

Our President, George Hill, was honored to accept the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution award for Excellence in Community Service. We thank the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution and its Constitution Chapter Regent, Stephanie Green for honoring him for his service work.

Photo: George Hill receiving the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution award for Excellence in Community Service.





Progress Report from the Grounds Crew by Scott Staples

The Oak Hill grounds team has been very hard at work. Our assignment is to continue to stay on top of the maintenance tasks while undertaking improvement tasks that will keep the cemetery healthy and strong for the next 170 years.

If you've visited Oak Hill recently, then you've seen some of our restoration work. We've reset stones and groups of stones, re-built walls, crowned and re-graded several hills, moved and removed paths, and rebuilt incredibly heavy stone stairways. We've pruned and removed plants that were unsightly.

Most importantly, we've rebuilt the terraces in the oldest part of the cemetery, North Hill, both restoring and protecting the landscape while also creating wonderful new burial spaces. We laid new granite guttering, brought in tons of compactable fill dirt, and we've laid more than forty pallets of sod since last fall, and more before that, and more to follow in the near future.

One of our goals is to improve the quality of our grass. The quality of the grass is important to the families and visitors here. Healthy lawns are deeply satisfying to people. What we desire in our landscapes is nature idealized and managed. We associate green lawns with order and a natural tranquility. We don't need or even want a "perfect" lawn here. It wouldn't be harmonious with our landscape, nor would it be

healthy or appropriate. Oak Hill is a naturalistic and picturesque landscape, not a formal one. As the Superintendent here will remind me when I get frustrated with the condition of the grass, "We are a nineteenth century garden cemetery, not a golf course.". And he's right.

Grass that has fewer weeds needs to be mown less often and looks nicer between mowing. The problem with weeds is that they are ugly, grow too fast, and grow in the wrong spots. That's the scientific definition of a weed. The leverage point for us on the grounds crew is going to be managing the main seedings in the fall and spring. The key is to get the seed down fairly early so it is in place when conditions become optimal for growth.

We use two types of lawn grass here at Oak Hill. In the shade we use a blend of three fine fescues. The fescue grasses tend to be clump forming as opposed to mat forming, and require seeding at the correct density to achieve the desired result. It is very tempting to put down more seed than is needed in a vain attempt to get faster results, but we've found through repeated experimentation and observation that areas that are seeded too densely, while they look good upon sprouting, can just as quickly melt out due to overcrowding and fungus. And when we forget this lesson, nature is quick to remind us.

"One of our goals is to improve the quality of our grass."



In the sun we use what is called a tall turf fescue, which is a fairly hardy cool-season grass with improved heat tolerance. Tall turf fescue, or TTF for short, is grown because it is fairly shade, heat, and drought tolerant. The difficulties of having a green healthy lawn in the mid-Atlantic region is that we're too cold in the winter for the warm-season grasses to look good year-round, and too hot and humid in the summer for the cool-season grasses to look their best.

The breeders and growers of lawn seed have been working very hard to get the perfect grass. This year, we've ordered a new seed mix for the Ellipse Lawn that includes some improved bluegrass seed. We will conduct the experiment and evaluate the results.

We also continue with our planting trials, trying to find plants that the deer won't eat. Many plants are not the favorite of deer, but they seem willing to try pretty much everything other than daffodils. And we've found another plant they won't touch, too. Canna lilies. We've been very pleased with them this year. Hopefully the deer don't decide to eat them next week.

We've done much on our watch, and much more remains to be done. Every generation must dedicate itself anew to preserving and honoring the past.

Photos clockwise from top left: Rico and Ernesto with 4 re-set monuments, Willow Columbarium waiting for Brugmansia to bloom and Fountain Plaining in July.





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Oak Hill Cemetery Historic Preservation Foundation presents...

Dog Day 2019



Sunday, October 6th from 8am - 3pm
Blessing of the Animals at 2pm

Bring your pups for a leisurely walk around Oak Hill Cemetery.
Donations are welcome.

Dogs are not normally permitted in Oak Hill Cemetery. However, twice a year we make an exception for our furry friends to be let in! Our fall dog day will be held on **Sunday, October 6 from 8:00am to 3:00pm**. Visit our website for further details www.oakhillcemeterydc.org/events.

Calling all Volunteers

We are thankful to have been chosen by a local organization, Casey Trees (for the second time) for one of their Community Tree Planting Days. Our first Community Tree Planting Day was November 2017. We can happily report that those trees are thriving! You can follow their growth on our social media.

The Community Tree Planting Day for this year will be held on Saturday, November 16, 2019. We rarely have volunteer opportunities in the cemetery so this is a wonderful gardening opportunity for you to meet other Oak Hill supporters and get your hands dirty.

You can register for this opportunity by emailing Paul Warren at paulwarren@oakhillcemeterydc.org. We hope you can make it!



Chapel Cafe Book Club Coming to Oak Hill!

Foundation Board Member Judi Cochran will be leading the kick off of the Chapel Cafe Book Club on Wednesday, November 13th at 7:00 p.m. in the Historic Renwick Chapel. The book up for discussion is Katharine Graham's *Personal History*. The book was published in 1997 and was a Pulitzer Prize winner for Biography. Some of the comments on the book by those who have read it:

"This is my favorite book. It's a combination biography and history of the Washington Post and the Capitol City of Washington D.C."

"Fascinating read!"



The book is available on Amazon in all formats. Light refreshments will be served compliments of the Cemetery.

So come prepared! Read the book and have some suggestions for the next book the Chapel Cafe Book Club will be selecting in January.



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Sunday Social... A New Annual Tradition! by Lois Brown

Over 60 donors and friends gathered at beautiful Oak Hill on Sunday, June 23rd to socialize, catch up and meet new friends at our first Annual Donor's Appreciation Reception. Hosted by the Oak Hill Cemetery Historic Preservation Foundation Board, the event was comprised of a talk from the Board Vice President, music by the Duke Ellington School of the Arts, hors d'oeuvres, and friendly conversation on the Ellipse lawn. Thank you. We appreciate you and, we look forward to serving you for many years to come!



Duke Ellington School of the Arts Musicians: Hugh Downs, Ronald Walton and Joshua Teague



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Notables Map

We are delighted to have added a new feature to our website last month. Now, you can find your favorite Notable Figures through our Interactive Notables Map. Oak Hill provides a place for teaching about these individuals and their places in our shared history. Much like a living classroom, our public museum is a vast three-dimensional out-of-doors memory bank. In addition to visiting the places where notable figures reside, there are other notable features at Oak Hill that are worthy of a visit to appreciate their beauty and majesty. Please visit our website to view the map.



Make a lasting investment in the Cemetery's future through Planned Giving...

Here are some of the ways to leave a Planned Gift to Oak Hill Cemetery Historic Preservation Foundation:

- Include a bequest to Oak Hill in your will or revocable trust.
- Designate Oak Hill Cemetery as a full, partial or contingent beneficiary of your retirement account (IRA, 401(k), 403(b) or pension).
- Name Oak Hill Cemetery Historic Preservation Foundation as a beneficiary of your life insurance policy, life estate gift and life income plans.
- Gifts of Stocks and Bonds: donating appreciated securities, including stocks or bonds, is an easy and tax-effective way for you to make a gift to the cemetery.
- Donate real estate, donor will be provided with IRS Form 8282.

To discuss Planned Giving, please contact Lois M. Brown, loisbrown@oakhillcemeterydc.org



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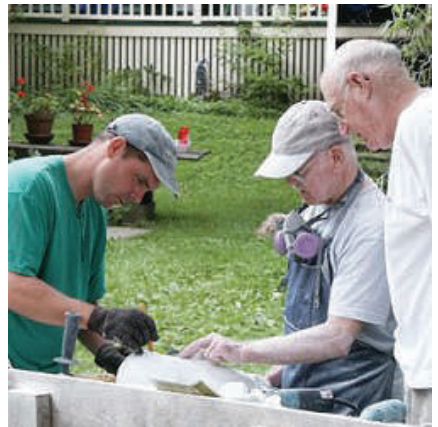
Historic Preservation Foundation Newsletter

Welcome New Board Members

The Oak Hill Cemetery Historic Preservation Foundation welcomed two new board members this spring, **Thomas E. Crocker**, and **Michael R. Weaver**. They have committed to upholding the Foundation's performance in relation to our mission and strategic objectives and for the effective stewardship of financial and human resources. Join us in welcoming them to the Preservation Foundation.

New to Oak Hill - Carriage House Carving Classes

Beginning this September, Oak Hill will be offering stone carving classes near the Carriage House. The Carriage House Carving Class will be a relaxed introduction to stone carving, and the basic tools and techniques of three-dimensional carving. These classes are designed for beginners, and also those individuals actively working on their own pieces are encouraged to attend. The history of stone carving as well as the various types of stone and methods used in the process will also be discussed. Classes will be taught by Cliff Seferlis. Cliff is a member of the Oak Hill Cemetery Historic Preservation Foundation Board and an expert Stone Sculptor. As an independent stone restoration specialist, he has spent over 20 years in the DC area and Maine restoring stonework, including the ongoing maintenance of the Smithsonian Castle's red sandstone exterior.



Materials and some tools will be provided and we recommend wearing comfortable shoes.

Please go to <https://www.oakhillcemeterydc.org/events> to read further and sign up!

Connecting with YOU Online by Liz Mizell

Our social media has launched! We are actively engaged on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. A few things you can find on our portals are; our hours of operations, current restoration projects, and upcoming events. Be sure to check us out, so that you know when our upcoming events (hosted by the Oak Hill Cemetery Historic Preservation Foundation) will be! We want you to get involved.

We can be found at:



<https://www.facebook.com/OakHillCemeteryDC>



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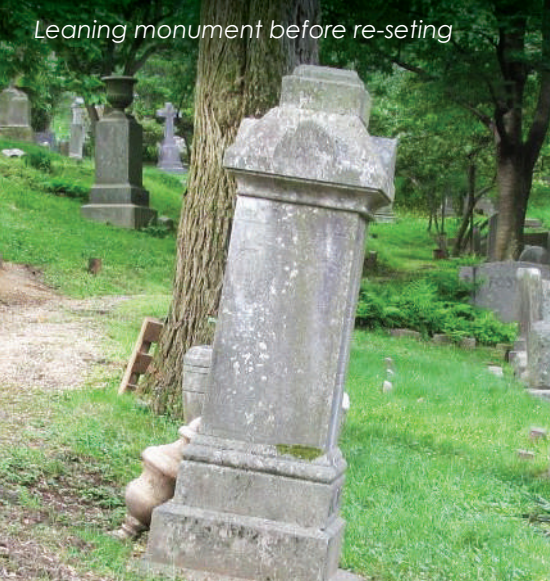
Moving? Please email us a change of
address: info@oakhillcemeterydc.org

Celebrating 170 Years!

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FIRST CLASS MAIL

Leaning monument before re-setting



Project complete! All reset and rebuilt!



Working with the pieces

