

Notes from the Gravegarden

NEWSLETTER OF THE OLD CITY CEMETERY
Lynchburg, Virginia



“How cold is it?”

The Emmett Jefferson angel monument bundled up in late January.

Photo by Ted Delaney

The Cemetery landscape at this time of the year looks similar to Andrew Wyeth’s quote. As we all know, winter this year is particularly cold. Visitors want to know when the honey from our beehives will be available again and when can they expect signs of spring here. It is a waiting game for us all!

Our staff was proud to host our second annual photo contest award ceremony on Sunday, January 26. The entries were all very different because the theme, “Kindred Spirits of the Gravegarden,” was left to the imagination of the photographers. Our panel of judges consisted of two previous winners, Robert Miller and Jean Wibbens, and volunteer and Board member Sandra Weigand. Our contest winners are listed on the following page. The winning photos are on display at the Cemetery Center until March 1. Please come by to see the photos!

—Karen Bracco

I prefer winter and fall, when you feel the bone structure of the landscape—the loneliness of it—the dead feeling of winter. Something waits beneath it, the whole story doesn’t show.

—Andrew Wyeth

2013 "Kindred Spirits of the Gravegarden" Photo Contest Winners



Best of Show and Viewers' Choice

"The First and Last Meeting"
By LuAnn Hunt



Second Place
Professional
Division
"Sickness and
Death"
By Michael Justice



Third Place—Professional Division
"Stoic Sentries" By Dan Farris



First Place
Amateur Division
Untitled
By Don Fiddler



Second Place
Amateur Division
"Couples and Keepers"
By Evangeline Poggemiller



Third Place
Amateur Division
"Frozen in Time"
By Greg Knopp



From the Executive Director

By Bruce Christian

As we say goodbye to 2013 and hello to 2014, I am reminded that we are in our season of rest here in the Cemetery. Most of our plantings are dormant or are perhaps still showing off their end of the season beauty formed in a berry or maybe a hip. Nonetheless, Old City Cemetery is a magical place even in winter. The stillness and starkness of this season presents views one does not get at other times of the year. We have had a dusting of “white stuff” and freezing rain playfully hanging from grave markers and holly which gives a special artistic scene.

With the end of the year we also had to mark the end of service of one of OCC’s best and favorite people. Kaye Moomaw has been our resident rosarian for many years. Her eye for the aesthetic is keen and her knowledge about all things horticultural bountiful. Not only that, she is simply a wonderful person with a bright smile and equally cheerful demeanor. Through the years, Kaye has made the graveyard bloom and created wonderful spaces for all types of plantings. The new Pest House garden has been a labor of love for

her for the last three years. When it is in bloom, you will see just how magical. One of my vivid recollections is of Kaye riding forth in the gator with barrels of water on the back to water individual plants on the property which were too far for the reach of a hose. Thank you Kaye for your dedication, advice, and for simply putting up with us. You’re the best!

In December we hosted the 6th annual Wreaths Across America ceremony on a cold, rainy December 14th. In spite of the drear, about 150 people attended and many of them assisted in placing over 1,000 wreaths on graves of veterans here in the Cemetery. As I like to tout, we have a veteran representing every armed American conflict from the Revolutionary War to Viet Nam resting here. This year the Blue Ride and James River Chapters of the National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution once again sponsored the program.

Please come see the Cemetery in these winter months. I know you will be surprised!



Cemetery Rosarian Kaye Moomaw

Photos by Ted Delaney



Curator's Corner

By Peter Conlon, Archival & Curatorial Intern



The glass bottles with glass stoppers were used to store the pharmaceutical or botanical ingredients necessary for the production of medicines. The bottle labeled “Acid. Oxalic.” contains a substance that has no known human applications today, and instead has niche uses as a laundry acid rinse and in bee-keeping. It is highly toxic. The bottle labeled “Essence of Pepsine” more than likely contained Pepsin, which could be used as an elixir to aid in stomach or digestive problems, particularly in small children with colic. Fairchild was the name of the company that made the product.

In early December, 2013, Tyler St. Clair of Lynchburg donated an interesting collection of pharmacy equipment and supplies to the Cemetery. All of the items were collected by her father Robert “Sandy” St. Clair, who was an independent pharmacist for many years in Glasgow, Virginia. He was also an avid collector of antiques—and especially old pharmacy pieces. This small sample of his collection illustrates how dramatically medicines and drug stores have changed over the past century.

The mortar and pestle are standards of human medical technology. Almost every early culture on Earth has produced a mortar and pestle or an equivalent. Ingredients would be placed in the mortar (the open container) and would then be ground up or made into a paste by the pestle with a crushing or stirring motion.

The Pyrex glass beaker is designed to measure and hold liquids. It was often used in the creation of

elixirs, tonics, and tinctures. It has a very ornate design, unlike the practical and utilitarian beakers we have today. The smaller beaker is made by Kimax. Both of these beakers must have been made before the 1950’s, because of the use of “DR” (drams) on the little beaker. “Drams” refers to a unit of measurement of volume in the “apothecaries’ system,” which was gradually phased out and officially abolished in the United States in 1971.

The two funnels would have been used to control

the flow of liquid to allow for more accurate pouring. Unfortunately these funnels do not have markers’ marks, so it is hard to pinpoint their origin.

The white porcelain compounding tray or “pill tile” is the most perplexing and enigmatic piece of the collection. Its maker’s



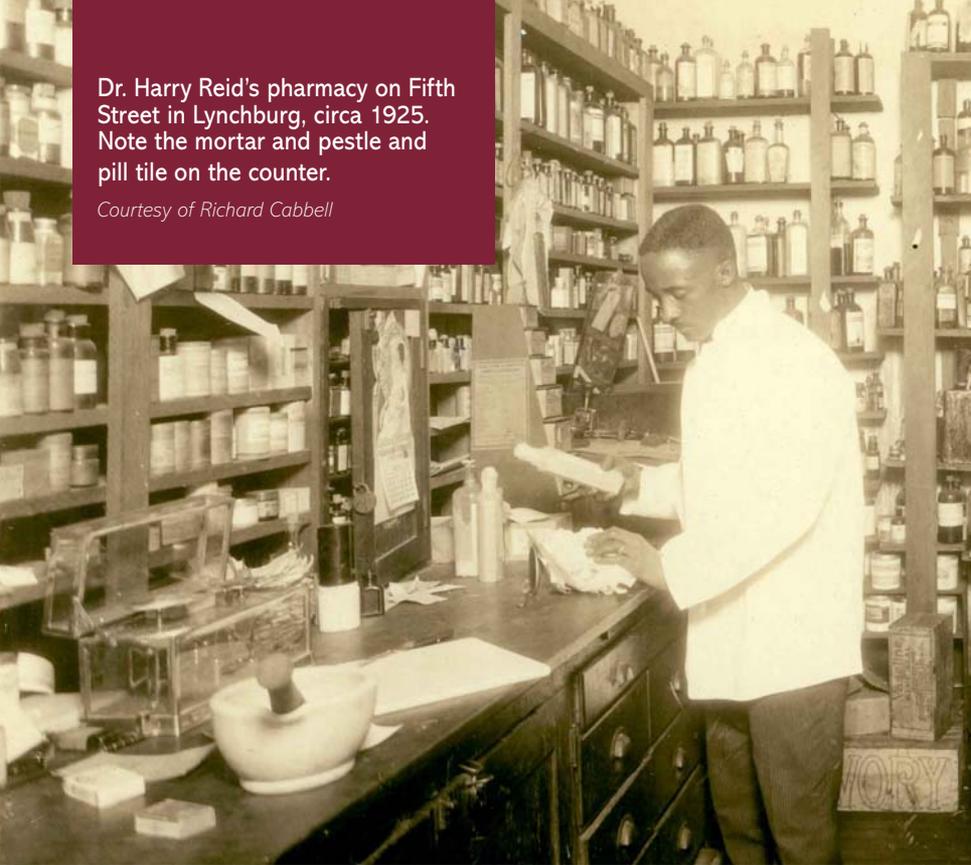
Graduation marks on the pharmacists' pill tile

Photos by Ted Delaney



Dr. Harry Reid's pharmacy on Fifth Street in Lynchburg, circa 1925. Note the mortar and pestle and pill tile on the counter.

Courtesy of Richard Cabbell



mark only indicates it was made in Germany by a company whose name begins with "M" (perhaps Merck?). It appears to be a work station of sorts; a place for ingredients to be chopped up and measured, or for pills or powders to be mixed. We are not exactly sure why the tile's graduation marks are in quarter-inch increments, with labels on the multiples of six quarter-inches.

There are several pharmacist at rest in Old City Cemetery, the most well-known of whom was

probably Dr. Harry W. Reid (1892–1969). Dr. Reid's pharmacy was located at 919 Fifth Street for many decades. Look for a future exhibit at the Cemetery about its resident pharmacists, using these fascinating new artifacts.

Peter Conlon is a senior at E.C. Glass High School and an archival and curatorial intern at the Cemetery this school year. He will attend the University of Mary Washington in the fall to study historic preservation.

Volunteer Spotlight

Kathy McGlothlin

When Kathy McGlothlin moved here from Portsmouth, Virginia, in 2009, she adopted Old City Cemetery! During her previous visits to Lynchburg, Kathy had discovered us and within a short period of time became a docent here. Her original volunteer form noted next to the Rose Festival section, "Available all day, wherever you can use me. I like it all."

That really describes Kathy's involvement here in a nutshell. She works here every Saturday as the Mourning Museum docent, except during the first quarter. My first summer



here Kathy was patient enough to train me on leading Summer Saturday Tours. She continues to share rotations with Ted and me conducting these same tours. Kathy also has lead roles during Candlelight Tours and the Rose Festival. She has been the host for National Donut Day for the two years we have had this event. By the way, she initiated the addition of this event at OCC. Finally, Kathy "re-designs" our rotating exhibit case in the front room every few months. Our staff plans the theme and on any given Saturday, she pulls together the items to give the display a special look!

For all Kathy has done over the years and for helping me learn the ropes, I thank you.

—Karen Bracco



Horticultural Highlights

By Laurie McMinn, Historic Grounds Supervisor

Technically, the Old City Cemetery is ‘closed’ for burials within the original boundaries, but a grassy open space diagonally across from the Chapel is currently designated for indigent burials that come through the City’s Social Services Department. When I interviewed for the job, I knew it was an active cemetery, but somehow digging graves did not stand out as a task I would be frequently scheduling into my crews’ regular work assignments.

When digging graves, we unveil many interesting features hidden below the sod. The soil excavated can be light and grainy like sand, yellow and packed in layers like a stack of papers, red clay, or slabs of granite rock. Tree roots reach far beyond the drip line but stay within the top 12 to 15 inches of the surface. Once a rusted pipe was unearthed that appeared to be part of an old forgotten fence. We haven’t found any horse shoes yet, so maybe the cemetery landscape was spared victims of the glanders epidemic! We try to have three workers on site for grave digging, and if not, the backhoe operator

must be out of the equipment if the other person needs to enter the grave hole to measure, hand dig corners, or retrieve tools.

Working in a cemetery has its downside, and OSHA

hazardous atmospheres (i.e. carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, natural gas, methane from decomposing bodies and oxygen deficient atmospheres), equipment hazards, falling loads, collapses, and cave-

ins since graves are dug four, not six feet deep, and OSHA inspectors should not enforce these recommendations. But think about this: one cubic foot of soil can weigh 140 pounds, one cubic yard 3500 pounds, and it only takes three minutes to suffocate if the lungs can’t expand from the sudden weight and pressure of a few feet of loose soil.

We had a ‘cave-in’ recently, and it was caused from the excavator bucket disturbing the grave wall while digging. Fortunately the vault had been closed and the worker only slid about two feet down into the grave.

Many cemeteries are not able to employ a large groundskeeping staff, and hazards can befall volunteers and visitors as well. Last November at the Hillcrest Cemetery in Edinburg, Texas, a staff member was working alone straightening a five-foot tall tombstone. A visitor witnessed the tombstone falling and called for help, but the one ton stone crushed the workers’ chest and he did not survive.



Larry Starks directing backhoe operator Charles Bradley during a grave dig.
Photos by Laurie McMinn

(Occupational Safety and Health Administration) issued a letter in 2009 to the National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA) outlining these specific hazards to cemetery workers; “Employees are exposed to hazards such as falls,

ins that could be deadly if the proper precautions are not taken.”

The NFDA replied current practices have removed many of these concerns, particularly dangers from trenches and cave-

Rock from four feet below
the Cemetery surface.



So keep alert when visiting cemeteries, and inform the staff if you notice any hazards that can cause harm to you or the tombstone if it were to fall and be damaged. We want everyone who came here on their own to be able to leave on their own as well!

Board of Directors Corner

By Nancy K. Young, Board Chair

WHO WE ARE

The roster for the Board of Directors for the Southern Memorial Association (Old City Cemetery) shows a membership of twenty-one individuals from Lynchburg and surrounding counties, along with one resident of Richmond. Four serve in an *ex officio* capacity representing the City of Lynchburg, nearby neighborhoods, special interest groups, and other nonprofits with strong ties to our organization. All board members have a connection with Old City Cemetery: family members are buried here, have worked as a volunteer, have been a regular attendee of events, have an interest in the historic archives and artifacts on the grounds, or enjoy the horticulture component. Whatever the reason, all members of the board feel a strong connection.

WHAT WE DO

We employ a committee structure (currently six) to carry out our

governance responsibilities in between our quarterly board meetings. We actively advocate for Old City Cemetery encouraging our families, neighbors, and friends, even strangers, to visit and enjoy this special Lynchburg jewel. Also, some board members contribute time as volunteers,



Cemetery Board of Directors, 2010

Photo by Ted Delaney

assisting staff with daily activities, special events, and operating our gift shop. In some way Old City Cemetery has become a permanent part of our lives.

With this issue of *Notes from the Graveyard* this column will regularly appear, offering information about the Board of Directors and its activities.

Call for Volunteers!



Old City Cemetery Museums and Arboretum is recruiting new volunteers for its 2014 visitors season. To become a new volunteer at Old City Cemetery, you must complete orientation and a training program to prepare you for your position (with the exception of special event volunteers). No experience is required, but potential volunteers should have a love of history, historic preservation, or horticulture, and enjoy learning new things.

Current volunteers will be contacted to confirm your interest going forward this year.

The Cemetery has volunteers who share their time and talents in many different ways:

- Welcoming visitors in the Cemetery Center
- Helping with special events like the annual Antique Rose Festival and Candlelight Tours
- Gardening once a week with other “gravegardeners”
- Repairing gravemarkers
- Indexing Diuguid burial records

New volunteers may attend orientation on one of the dates listed on the right.

Orientation is followed by group training and also includes shadowing a current volunteer. Staff is also available to work with anyone individually if training classes do not fit into your schedule.

For more information about all of the rewarding volunteer opportunities available—and to receive a volunteer application—please contact Karen Bracco at (434) 847-1465 or karen@gravegarden.org. Volunteer applications are also available on our website, under “Tours.”

New Volunteer Orientation

Friday, February 21, 2014
10–11 a.m.

Saturday, February 22, 2014
9–10 a.m.

Tuesday, February 25, 2014
6–7 p.m.

Parting Shot



Kelly Hartman Gladden took this photograph during the snowfall on January 21, 2014. She captured the evergreen wreaths placed on graves in the Confederate Section during the annual "Wreaths Across America" ceremony in December.

Notes from the *Gravegarden*

Published Quarterly by the
Southern Memorial Association *for*
Old City Cemetery, Lynchburg, Virginia

Edited by
Karen Bracco *and* Ted Delaney



We Welcome Suggestions for Future
Newsletter Articles and Images.
Please Contact Us:

OLD CITY CEMETERY
401 Taylor Street
Lynchburg, Virginia 24501

Telephone: (434) 847-1465

Fax: (434) 856-2004

E-mail: occ@gravegarden.org

Website: www.gravegarden.org

Find Us on Facebook!