

401 Taylor Street, Lynchburg, Virginia 24501 ~ 434-847-1465 ~ www.gravegarden.org

Autumn in the Gravegarden



ready or not, winter is coming.

“Is it that time of the year again?!” is what many of you are probably thinking as the holidays seem to come around quicker and quicker with each passing year. That phrase is something the Cemetery staff also seems to be saying a lot these past few months, particularly with the comings and goings of our many autumn and early winter events. Be sure to check out the “Happenings” section on page 3 to see some of the fun that was had on the Cemetery grounds. It’s also time for the planning and publication of our 2011 Calendar of Events. The staff and Board of Directors are busy working

The picture to the left seems to say so much about this time of the year at Old City Cemetery. Fall is upon us, the glorious sugar maples in the Confederate Section have all but shed their leaves, and

together to bring you some truly exciting new programs, along with our tried and true annual ones. We have already lined up some great speakers for our “Ready, Set... Bloom!” garden symposium in March, begun to root the roses for our Rose Festival in May, and (if you can believe it) are even diligently keeping a list of possible characters for next year’s Candlelight Tours. Of course, as our Executive Director writes in his “From the Director” on page 2, our success is dependent upon you, our friends, so we always welcome any ideas you may have for events. Some of the greatest things about the Cemetery and its grounds were first thought up by visitors and volunteers (i.e. building a Chapel on the grounds was one!), so please send your thoughts our way.

The theme for this newsletter is friends: from a friend of the Cemetery and its citizens who goes back 150 years (Mollie Forsberg) to newer ones, like those that gave generously to help build our new addition, led tours, and assisted with programs and events, to even our animal companions that call the Cemetery grounds their home, we hope you enjoy reading about those we are so thankful for—you, our friends.

Happy Holidays and stay warm!

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From the Director

By Bruce Christian, Executive Director

There is a quote from *It's a Wonderful Life* which states, "no man is a failure who has friends". As we head into the latter part of 2010, I have been quite mindful of that so often this year here at the Old City Cemetery. We are truly grateful for all of you.

Back at the end of June we marked the completion of our construction project with a grand dedication of the new addition and renovated space made possible through the generosity of friends. It was a joy to celebrate with the Lee, Taylor, and Morrison families and friends whose support and love of the Cemetery is marked by our elegant new areas.

The Cemetery was also fortunate to receive a challenge grant from the George and Effie Seay Foundation and an anonymous friend to assist with the construction of the archival vault. The Board of Directors of the Southern Memorial Association then went to work to solicit the required matching funds. Within a month of our letter going out we had received a total of over \$23,000 from more than 120 friends which helped us exceed our \$20,000 challenge.

To date Old City Cemetery has more than 730 "friends" on Facebook. While I am not a Facebook person I do recognize the importance of social networking and thoroughly enjoy the pictures and comments we receive daily from these friends. This helps to spread the news and affection people have for these grounds. Word of mouth from our Cemetery friends is what helps us in so many ways beyond your imagination. One way this appeared quite evident was the amazing turnout we had this year for our Third Annual Candlelight Tours. In case you missed the tours or other programs over the past few months, or if you just want a recap of what you did see, you can read more about the events on page 3.

Our success is dependent on the kindness of our friends and, even to quote another movie, strangers. Thank you to all of you who help us in so many ways. You may think your contribution of time or treasure or presence isn't worth a lot. Trust me, it is. We know you as our friends.



Pictures: (top) Edith Lee Reading Room; (bottom) Ribbon cutting ceremony with Mayor Joan Foster, other City officials, and donors

Happenings...

By Dawn Fields Wise
Public Relations & Visitor Services Manager

People are often amazed that a staff of four can put together the many programs, tours, and events the Cemetery offers each year. However, we are always quick to point out that we couldn't begin to do it all (or any of it, for that matter!) without our amazing volunteers and partners. Over the past several months, we have had the wonderful help of Nature Zone to assist with our Pollinator Series, Historian Nancy Weiland to lead our Bawdy Ladies tour, over 50 volunteers to act as tour guides and assistants for the four nights of Candlelight Tours, and many loyal SMA Board members to make Share Faire another great success. In case you didn't get a chance to attend some of the programs, we hope you enjoy these photos. And if you would like to be a volunteer for the Cemetery, be sure to check out page 7 to see how.



All photos : SMA/Ted Delaney



Pictured from top to bottom, L to R: Nancy Weiland leads a group of attendees on the biennial Bawdy Ladies tour; participants in the Allen Bobson service; inset: Allen Bobson memorial; two actors on the Third Annual Candlelight Tours; shoppers at Share Faire looking for that special find in the Edith Lee Reading Room

Curator's Corner

By Ted Delaney,
Assistant Director

Over the past few months, we've been very fortunate to obtain several portraits of people buried in the Old City Cemetery. Here is a small sample of recent additions to our "Cemetery Family Album":



Emma Jane Nuckols Gilliam
1847-1918
Mother of 13 Children
Courtesy of Bonnie Floyd Davis



George Randolph Davis, Sr.
(Pictured with wife Mabel)
1876-1965
Car Washer at Auto Garage
Courtesy of Davis Family



Reeves Agnew Fowler
1948-2000
Courtesy of Linda Fowler



Melvina Patricia Walker Terry
1959-2010
Cook and Caretaker
Courtesy of Joel Terry, Sr.

If you have a picture of someone at final rest in OCC—or if you know someone who does—please let us know!

Nurse to Our Soldiers

By Lynne Davis Spies
Volunteer Writer and Researcher

Many attendees on the annual Old City Cemetery Candlelight Tours ask for more information about some of the “characters” that were portrayed. Here is a short bio, written by the scriptwriter, Lynne Davis Spies, about Mary Elizabeth Morgan Otey Forsberg (a.k.a. “Mollie”), the nurse who worked in the Confederate hospitals during the Civil War.

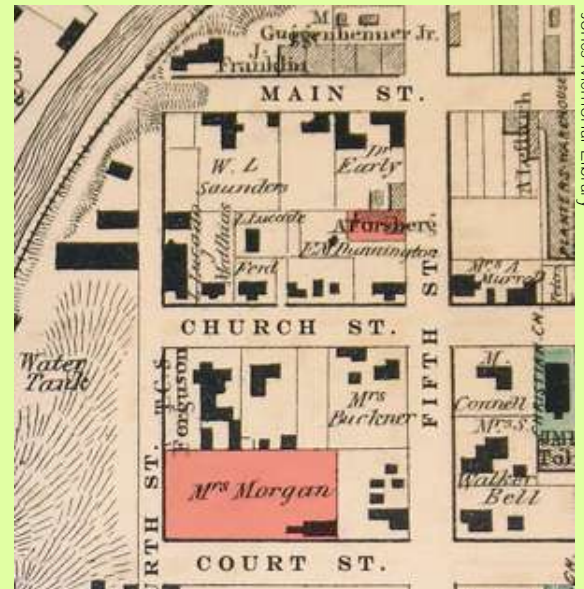
Ninety-nine of the Confederate soldiers buried in the Old City Cemetery were cared for in a unique hospital in Lynchburg—the Ladies’ Relief Hospital—organized, supported, and staffed by Lynchburg women. One of those women was Mary Elizabeth Morgan Otey Forsberg (1839-1918), daughter of Caroline Morgan, who is buried in the Old City Cemetery.

Fortunately for posterity, Mollie, as she was known, wrote her “Hospital Reminiscences” in 1901 (reprinted in the *Lynchburg News* in 1960), which allow readers a clear view of the women’s efforts. She writes that one of the reasons the Ladies’ Relief Hospital was established as an independent hospital was that the surgeon in charge of the other city hospitals did not want women’s help; he said he “had no use for women nor for flies” in his institutions.

Mollie, who lost her first husband, George Gaston Otey, early in the War, worked tirelessly at the Hospital. For example, when 120 injured men from the Battle of the Wilderness arrived, she greeted each soldier by “raising [each man’s head] to my shoulder [to] give him a tin cup of iced buttermilk, before any questions were asked [of him].” She wrote letters home and read to the men, but she also bound ghastly wounds and watched young men bleed to death. Such work was not for the faint of heart. She writes that “[t]hose were times so strange, that, looking back, we sometimes feel it must all have been a dream. Surely we did not really live amid such surroundings as then existed.”

When the War ended, the young widow married a Swedish engineer who fought for the South, August Forsberg. She coyly writes: “[T]here were some bright spots in this hospital life. The Little ‘God of Love’ was not idle even there. I know of at least one woman who learned to know that the way to a soldier’s heart laid in ministering to his wounds.... Today she is the happy wife of the man whose wound she dressed for four ‘short’ months.”

August Forsberg became City Engineer for Lynchburg. He and Mollie are buried in the Presbyterian Cemetery, not so far from some of the Confederate soldiers she must have tended at the Ladies’ Relief Hospital.



Residences of Mollie Forsberg and her mother, Caroline Morgan



Morgan plot in Old City Cemetery

Horticultural Highlights

By Laurie Jamerson,
Historic Grounds Supervisor

*Autumn is a second spring,
when every leaf is a flower.*
~ Albert Camus



Stephen Liffie



Laurie Jamerson



Laurie Jamerson

Pictures from top to bottom: squirrel cracking up a prickly chestnut; a hawk on the prowl; some of the colorful beehives on the grounds

The extreme dry conditions extending back several years put undue stress on all plant material in the Cemetery as well as surrounding areas, and an early, short fall came upon us. Where nature had taken the upper hand, many dry leaves were sailing aloft before getting a chance to show off their spectacular golden glory. But the famous sugar maples held their own and, **fortunately, these magnificent trees didn't drop leaf at the same time**, so visitors had several weeks to enjoy their beauty.

The wildlife on the grounds is already preparing for winter, somehow chewing through the prickly hulls of Chinese chestnuts and sticky flesh of the Osage Orange fruit. Birds, especially the sleek black crows, have helped themselves to most of the orchard fruit and one is amused to watch the squirrels **and groundhogs vie for anything they drop**. A large Coopers' hawk soaring on the air drafts suddenly dove to the ground after it sighted a tempting meal item. And the robins had come by earlier than usual to dine on holly berries! The meadow near the racks of colorful bee hives has been over-seeded with a special selection of a wildflower mix to provide more nectar sources next spring for the Cemetery honey makers.

As dry as it has been, blooms are still gracing our roses. We are following recommendations from the Antique Rose Emporium (ARE) and using bark mulch on them this fall. ARE has found **the decomposing bark mimics nature's techniques and they have had fewer issues with insect and disease**. Top dressing will be done on the rose beds again in spring to get ready for the Annual Antique Rose Festival. We do have a few numbers of each of 24 varieties of roses in gallon containers still available. As long as the ground remains workable, these can be planted NOW to provide fresh spring blooms in your garden. Deep watering at planting and a 3-4" thick mulch ring the size of the planting hole will provide winter protection. You can purchase them at the Cemetery Center during regular business hours.

Soon we will be holding several informal workshops on the Cemetery grounds for the gravegardener program. Topics will include plant and weed identification, proper pruning times and techniques, as well as seed collection and propagation. Look for dates on the website under "Horticulture" in the near future.

Announcements & News

Call for Volunteers!

The Old City Cemetery could not have become the success it is today without the help of our many dedicated volunteers. There are opportunities to volunteer to suit every interest and we need people in every area. Some of the positions available:

Tour Guides

Volunteers lead and assist the Cemetery staff with guided tours for adults and students. Costumes are not required. Docents are needed for the following areas of the Cemetery: Pest House Medical Museum; Station House Museum; Mourning Museum; Horticulture and Nature Tours; Black History; Confederate Section and Civil War History; Early Cemetery History; and Tombstone Rubbings.

Gravegardeners

Volunteers help with horticultural tasks in the Cemetery such as pruning, weeding, fertilizing, planting, painting, and assisting with special garden events such as the Annual Antique Rose Festival.

Training is provided and is done on a one-on-one basis.

Time commitment is dependent upon the new volunteer's field(s) of interest and prior knowledge. For more information, please contact Dawn Fields Wise at 434-847-1465, dawn@gravegarden.org, or visit our website at www.gravegarden.org.



Do you know someone who braves for old graveyards? Who is a local history buff? Or are you looking to share your love of the Old City Cemetery with someone who has never been here? Then pick up this perfect holiday gift for that unique person in your life! This is the story of the Old City Cemetery, as told by Jane Baber White, Director Emerita.

228 pages, Hardcover with dust jacket. Nearly 500 full-color photographs, fully indexed. Cost \$60.00 plus tax/shipping.

For more information or to order:
www.gravegarden.org or call 434-847-1465.

Upcoming Events

Holiday Decorations Workshops

Saturday, November 27th

Back by popular demand!

Each workshop is limited to 24 people. \$50.00 per person.

All materials provided.

Workshop A - 11/27

9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Workshop B - 11/27

2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Wreaths Across America

Saturday, December 11th
Ceremony begins at Noon
As part of a nationwide ceremony, commemorative wreaths will be placed on the graves of the many veterans buried on the Cemetery grounds.

Open House and Holiday Concert

Sunday, December 12th

1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Jefferson Choral Society will hold a free mini-concert at 3 p.m. in the historic Chapel, which will be decorated with natural greenery collected from the grounds.

Hot cider and cookies will be served from 1– 4 p.m. in the Cemetery Center Gift Shop, which will also be decorated, and will be open for last minute gift purchases.

This picture of the 11th VA, Co. G, Honor Guard in prayer for the fallen was taken by Jeff Coleman on May 30th, 2010, at the annual Confederate Memorial Day Service in the Confederate Section.

The 11th VA was organized at Lynchburg in May 1861. They were in the battle of First Manassas and in April 1862 their numbers totaled 750. By April 1865 only one officer and 28 men were left to surrender at Appomattox, VA.

If you have a picture of the Cemetery you would like to see in the next newsletter, please email in JPG form to dawn@gravegarden.org.

Thank you, Jeff, for this great picture!



Old City Cemetery
401 Taylor Street
Lynchburg, VA 24501



We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.gravegarden.org