

Notes from the Gravegarden

NEWSLETTER OF THE OLD CITY CEMETERY
Lynchburg, Virginia



'Father Hugo's Rose' (*Rosa hugonis*, Species) was one of the first to bloom this year. The staff is happy to be discovering a new blooming rose or flower when we come in daily!

SPRING FEVER

By Karen Bracco

As we head into the spring season here, I am happy to report that 17 new people have signed up as volunteers. The volunteers that have signed up for gravegardening have been a tremendous help getting the grounds ready for Garden Week and the Southern Garden History Society tour coming up next week. I am also appreciative of the "veteran" volunteers that continue to help in our gardening efforts. We are going to continue to meet every Wednesday between 8:30 – 12:00 indefinitely.

One of our volunteers, Ben Whitacre, was kind enough to paint the wood trim of the Cooling Coffin case on the front deck of the Cemetery Center. The previous mourning flag was replaced after many years of service!

In the past few weeks we have had several very diverse activities here. From Maple Syrup Tapping to "Opera to Live For" to a Honeybee program, we try to have something here for everyone! In the next two weeks we are pleased to add to our exciting program list. Of course that means the new cookbook

release on April 28 and the Rose Festival on May 11! The month of May concludes with our annual Confederate Memorial Day Service on May 26 and the annual Memorial Day Bird Walk & Count on May 27.

Do not forget to make the Cemetery your destination in the next few weeks!



This month we installed a new mourning banner and repainted the cooling coffin case trim.

Photos by Karen Bracco

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By Bruce Christian

I am writing this article on Tax Day 2013. (If anyone needs to be reminded of a great charitable organization, keep Old City Cemetery in mind. You all know I never miss the opportunity to ask for money!) Over the last couple of weeks I have been on multiple flights in and out of Lynchburg. What has struck me is how different spring

2013 has been from 2012. Last evening everything had a fresh green look along with beautiful redbud and pear and cherry trees. Coming to the Cemetery today it was as though everything decided it was okay to burst forth in color after a particularly slow beginning. Our new dogwoods outside my window here are looking so cheerful.

During the winter months there has been a flurry of activity here on the grounds. We have a new irrigation system running along both sides of the old brick wall as well as into the new Pest House Garden. This has been a much needed and long hoped for project. We are very grateful to Kirk Schultz and the City of Lynchburg for installing a 21st century system with timers and drip lines. We have also just completed the first stage of new curbing in the road from the cobblestone to the brick wall. It has made the drive a bit wider and replaced old concrete curbing with period appropriate granite from the City. Kaye and Lisa have been working on our roses and the Pest House Garden to make everything look fresh and trim. Laurie and her crew of helpers have placed new trees and plants along the goat fence and outside of the Cemetery Center. We are looking so good!

All of the activity on the grounds was working with a deadline of mid-April. We are holding a number of events here in the Cemetery from the latter part of April into May. Old City Cemetery is a spotlight stop

for Historic Garden Week. We are hosting the unveiling of Jessica Ward's new cookbook *Food to Live For*. It is absolutely wonderful and the perfect companion to her award-winning *Food to Die For* which is currently in its ninth printing. In May we have the Southern Garden History Society (under the orchestration and guidance of Director Emerita Jane White and featuring our own Ted Delaney as a speaker) coming to tour. Finally our 18th Annual Antique Rose Festival is May 11th. Most of you know I love this time of year when it becomes our job to ensure every visitor goes home with THE perfect rose matched for him/her. With the weather cooperating, each of these events should have beautiful bloom.

I hope you all will come by to see all we have been doing during the first quarter. It will amaze you. Thanks again to the City of Lynchburg for being such a great partner with the Southern Memorial Association. Thanks as well to all of you who love being a part of all we do here in the gravegarden.



Photo by Ted Delaney

City contractors installed new granite curbs near the Pest House this spring.

CURATOR'S CORNER

By Ted Delaney

Here are a three portraits of Cemetery residents we've discovered in the past few months. If you have a picture of someone at rest in Old City Cemetery, please let us know. We're always trying to add faces to names!



Easter Hughes Hendricks

1893-1920

Homemaker

(Pictured in 1918 with daughter Susie, in front yard of their house in Dearington)

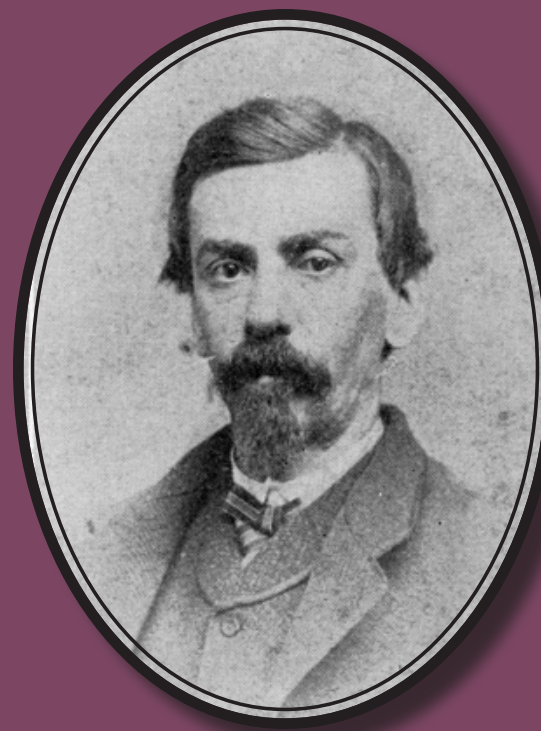


Captain Willis

1873-1920

President of Mt. Chine Business College and
Proprietor of Mt. Chine Drug Store (both on
Fifth Street in Lynchburg)

Officer in *True Reformers* Fraternal Order



Capt. Joseph A. Parker

1839-1904

Farmer in Amherst County
Member of "Mosby's Rangers"
During the Civil War

HORTICULTURAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Laurie McMinn



Photos by Laurie McMinn

Treasure hunting has become a very common pastime, ramped up with internet and GPS apps that take the adventure from your local neighborhood to almost anywhere in the world. Geocaching, Rock Stashing and Letterboxing are all forms of finding hidden treasures using navigational skills and clues to find them.

Well here in Old City Cemetery, we have been tagged by these hunting trips, sometimes with very interesting surprises! Researching Letterboxing, it became popular in the United States after an article published in the April 1998 issue of the Smithsonian

highlighted its origins in Dartmoor, England beginning in 1854. Readers intrigued with the concept brought it to life in the States and world-wide. There is a 'club' of Letterbox members, but unlike other organizations, there are no formal officers or membership fees, just people treasure hunting with the same final outcome; enjoying the outdoors and discovering places near and far they may not have considered a 'destination.'

The goal or 'prize' of Letterboxing is to enter your 'signature stamp' in a logbook, registering fun information like where you are from and the date of the find. In return, you stamp your own logbook with the 'treasure' stamp. These signature stamps have a life all their own, and many are handmade to symbolize either the place of the find or some characteristic of the mighty hunter.

You can research a country, state, town or specific destination, like OCC, and plan a day trip around Letterboxing. There are also blogs you can comment on after your hunting trip that help update the status of the hidden object, as sometimes they are damaged by weather or other fallacies of man and nature. The first entry I found for OCC dated back to 2009 and the most recent was earlier this spring. Some treasure hunting trips in the Cemetery will pique your interest with these tag lines; Old City Cemetery: Jane, M.C. Escher's Fish 1, and how appropriate—Rest in Pieces.

You can join in the fun by checking out several websites including Letterboxing North America, and Atlas Quest which also has fun explorer patches for sale. Both sites will help you get started treasure hunting and there will be no more boring weekends!

...And what about the surprises to the Cemetery grounds crew? Well we like to keep the place tidy and are suspicious of black packages made of duct tape hidden almost out of sight. Only upon inspection do we get a chance to admire someone's artistic talent that carved the signature stamp awaiting the next Letterboxing treasure hunter!



Akebia Vine in Bloom



P. S. United Way Day of Caring volunteers divided and planted daffodils in the Confederate Section last year and they were beginning to bloom this spring. This year we are planning to divide some family plots of crowded Iris with the help of volunteers.

Daffodils planted in the Confederate Section by Day of Caring volunteers in 2011 and 2012 bloomed beautifully this spring.

Meet Diana Bryant and Cedric Watts



This spring we have two new faces joining the grounds crew and I am sure you will agree, they are doing a great job manicuring these 27 acres. Diana Bryant has been with the City for nine years working most recently on the expressway mowing crew. Cedric Watts is a returning seasonal worker that helped mulch the skillions of leaves last fall and is now getting his first taste of 'spring' growing/ mowing fever. Be sure to thank them for their hard work and dedication to maintaining this wonderful historic site.

News & Notes

OCC Board Member at Virginia Festival of the Book

DuBois Miller, a board member here at Old City Cemetery, was invited in March to the 19th Annual Virginia Festival of the Book in Charlottesville, VA. DuBois was available during the conference to sign copies of his book, *Ten on Tin*. The book is an account of his life growing up in the Tinbridge Hill area of Lynchburg. He tells us that he met quite a few authors and we have included a photo of DuBois (*on left*) with the Honorable John Lewis from Georgia.

The conference invites select authors from all over the country to this prestigious book event. The Virginia Foundation for the Humanities sponsors this event and their mission is to celebrate reading and literacy.



Courtesy of DuBois Miller

Remembering Ruth Glass - 1923-2013



Photos by Ted Delaney

In March we lost one of our most faithful and engaging volunteers, Ruth Glass. Ruth was one of those rare individuals who was interested and interesting. She was a regular Tuesday office volunteer for many years, willing to help us with any task. Ruth always seemed to have some nugget she had just discovered or heard that she was excited to share.

Ruth was also a docent at Poplar Forest and had the home phone number for Jim Rees, recently retired Executive Director of Mount

Vernon. (We believe she finagled an early taste of that whiskey they are distilling there.)

Ruth knew everyone and could talk to anyone. She had an astonishing knack for making connections between seemingly unconnected people and places, both historical and contemporary.

We will miss her Michigander accent, marvelous demeanor, and thirst for knowledge.



Ruth often assisted with school tours. In this 2006 photo she supervises a tombstone rubbing.

NEWS & NOTES

Food to Live For Is Here!

Jessica Ward's much anticipated companion to *Food to Die For* has finally arrived from the printer and will be officially released on Sunday, April 28.

Photo by Sam O'Keefe, Courtesy of News & Advance



The book features 83 recipes, 12 short essays by Jessica on various topics of cooking and entertaining, and two essays by Assistant Director Ted Delaney about cooks and dinner parties from local history. There are over 70 photographs of the Cemetery interspersed throughout the book, including five full-page color photos. The cost is \$25.

Author Jessica Ward wrote the book entirely as a volunteer and, at her request, will receive no financial compensation from book sales. Thank you, Jessica!

Bird Watching at OCC

The Lynchburg Bird Club meets here, starting at the Cemetery Gatehouse, on the third Thursday of every month from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. It's a leisurely walk to spot, identify, and count the various bird species found in Old City Cemetery. They are also checking the Cemetery's blue bird houses. Feel free to join them anytime. All are welcome!



Photo by Ted Delaney

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We Welcome Suggestions for Future
Newsletter Articles and Images.
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