

Notes from the Gravegarden

NEWSLETTER OF THE OLD CITY CEMETERY
Lynchburg, Virginia

My First Year

By Karen Bracco

**“The only source
of knowledge is
experience.”**

—*Albert Einstein*

With this quote as my entrée, I have just completed my first full year as the Public Relations and Visitor Services Manager! To tell you that the year has been a learning experience would be an understatement. Each month, much less every week has been different from the previous. When I began last summer I concentrated on as much general history of the cemetery as possible because every week we had a Saturday Morning tour. My “cheat sheets” were used often as I began to do the tours on my own. I can proudly say that a year later, I have absorbed the majority of the

information and thoroughly enjoy the summer tours once again.

The Cemetery is now well into the second part of our Calendar of Events. Behind the scenes here preparations are well under way for Candlelight Tours. I feel an excitement with the fall slate of activities on the horizon. October is always exceptionally beautiful and busy here! We are open seven days a week and on three of those Sundays we have an event planned. We are pleased to have a Blessings of the Animals Service, All Hallows Eve Service, and a Sunday Autumn Afternoon in the Gravegarden Tour this year as well as another edition of “Opera to Live For.” Our Candlelight Tours are the last two weekends in October, including Thursdays.

Besides the natural beauty of the Cemetery, my joy in the past year has been meeting all the folks who have a connection here. From the staff, visitors, and the wonderful volunteers, it has been a treat to get to know everyone

that has crossed my path! As a newsletter recipient, I invited you to visit often. As you already know, this continues to be a special destination!

August is the peak of the butterfly population in Virginia. The Cemetery's pond area is teeming with butterflies this time of year!

Photo by Karen Bracco



From the Executive Director

By Bruce Christian

August is upon us and there is still a great deal of green here in Old City Cemetery. I cannot remember a spring/summer when we have had so much moisture that there has been virtually no need to water on the grounds. Add to that a late spring and the graveyard has been putting on quite a show for all the visitors who have come.

Last year we implemented new hours for the Cemetery Center. We are open from 10-3 Monday through Saturday. The only months we are open on Sundays are April, May, and October. Beginning this month we have also set new "office hours" for Kathy and Ted. They are available for calls and visits beginning at noon Monday through Friday. We have done this to allow them quiet time, without interruptions, for projects and tasks that require good concentration. Karen and I are here each day to greet visitors and answer questions, along with our outstanding volunteers who assist in the front room Monday through Saturday during normal operating hours.

While summer seems to be a slower time for activity here in

the Cemetery, this year there has been a flurry of activity. The second part of our roadway improvement project is underway. There will be new granite curbing from the



Installation of new granite curbs near the Pest House finally finished in late July.
Photo by Ted Delaney

cobblestone section to the brick wall. Once that is complete the roadway will be resurfaced all the way down to the Station House Museum. Please forgive the inconvenience while this important upgrade is being done. It may require a bit of ingenuity but one

can still access all parts of the Cemetery...just not in a full drive through.

Effective June 30 SMA had to say good-bye to five longtime

that was asked. We will sorely miss Vivian Williams (who has a wonderful family plot here in the Cemetery and faithfully represented descendants of those buried here), Bill Pugh (who left part of a finger in the line of duty and continues to be part of the tombstone repair team), Anne Wood (who represented the Relicts or Association members of SMA as well as bringing her bright smile and legal acumen), Carolyn Bell (who helped make grant money appear at just the right time and spearheaded the *Remembering Tinbridge Hill* book project), and Lynn Dodge (who as City Liaison made working with the City so smooth and helped with renewing our Management Contracts). Thank you does not do justice to all they have meant to us.

In losing these former members we did add five new ones. We wish to welcome Becky O'Brian, Kevin Shroyer, Jessica Ward, Sandra Weigand, and Darryl Whitesell. Thank you for agreeing to come be part of Old City Cemetery!

Enjoy the remainder of your summer and come see all we continue to do here!

members of the board. Three of them were founding members of the board who had moved over from the old Board of Advisors. Each of them brought wisdom, energy, generosity of time and spirit, and a willingness to promote OCC and do anything

Curator's Corner: Beyond the Boxwood Hedge

By Ted Delaney

This year has been a year of anniversaries. The Battle of Gettysburg. Stonewall Jackson's death. The March on Washington. President Kennedy's assassination. For us here at Old City Cemetery, 2013 also marks the 20th anniversary of the devastating summer storm that sparked the rehabilitation of the Cemetery that made it the landmark attraction it is today.

Around 5:30 p.m. on Friday, June 4, 1993, a violent

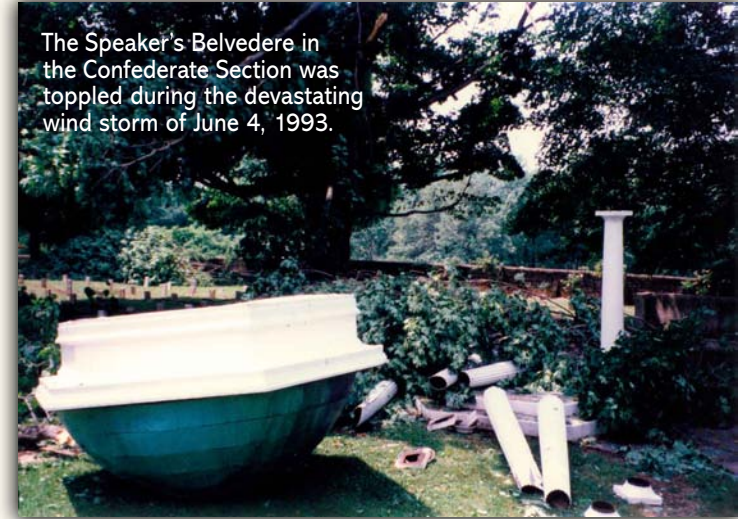
wind storm swept through Central Virginia with over 75 mile-per-hour winds. APCO reported that 80% of its service area lost power in a mere eight minutes. In downtown alone the historic Academy Theatre's rear wall collapsed, the steeple of First Baptist Church on Court Street plummeted into the sanctuary, and the steeple of Court Street Baptist Church had to be removed and completely rebuilt.

In Old City Cemetery the damage was widespread and severe.

Dozens of trees were lost, tombstones were broken, and debris was scattered over every section of the grounds. The most dramatic damage was in the Confederate Section, where the domed Speaker's Belvedere was knocked completely over by maple tree branches. Jane White, who was then an officer of the Southern Memorial Association, which

at that time only managed the Confederate Section, often recalled that the storm "finished off" the neglected and overgrown graveyard that lay outside the Confederate Section.

From this devastation, however, came something wonderful. Seeing the damage and realizing the herculean effort it would take to repair, White was inspired to lead a volunteer effort to clean up the entire Cemetery. In *Once Upon a Time...A Cemetery Story* she wrote, "In my earlier life as a landscape designer and restorer of abandoned gardens, I felt I knew what to do—this was just on a scale twenty-six times larger than I had ever dealt with before." She led the SMA and its dedicated supporters beyond the boxwood hedge to make improvements to the entire Cemetery and eliminate the two very different standards of care that



The Speaker's Belvedere in the Confederate Section was toppled during the devastating wind storm of June 4, 1993.

existed at OCC.

Under White's leadership, SMA cleaned up the storm debris, reset fallen tombstones, re-erected the Belvedere, and planted 100 trees throughout the grounds to replace those lost in the storm. A huge pile of citywide storm debris was replaced with an attractive lotus pond and butterfly garden. SMA was officially incorporated for the first time in its 130-year history, and it received crucial tax-exempt, 501(c)(3) status from the IRS.

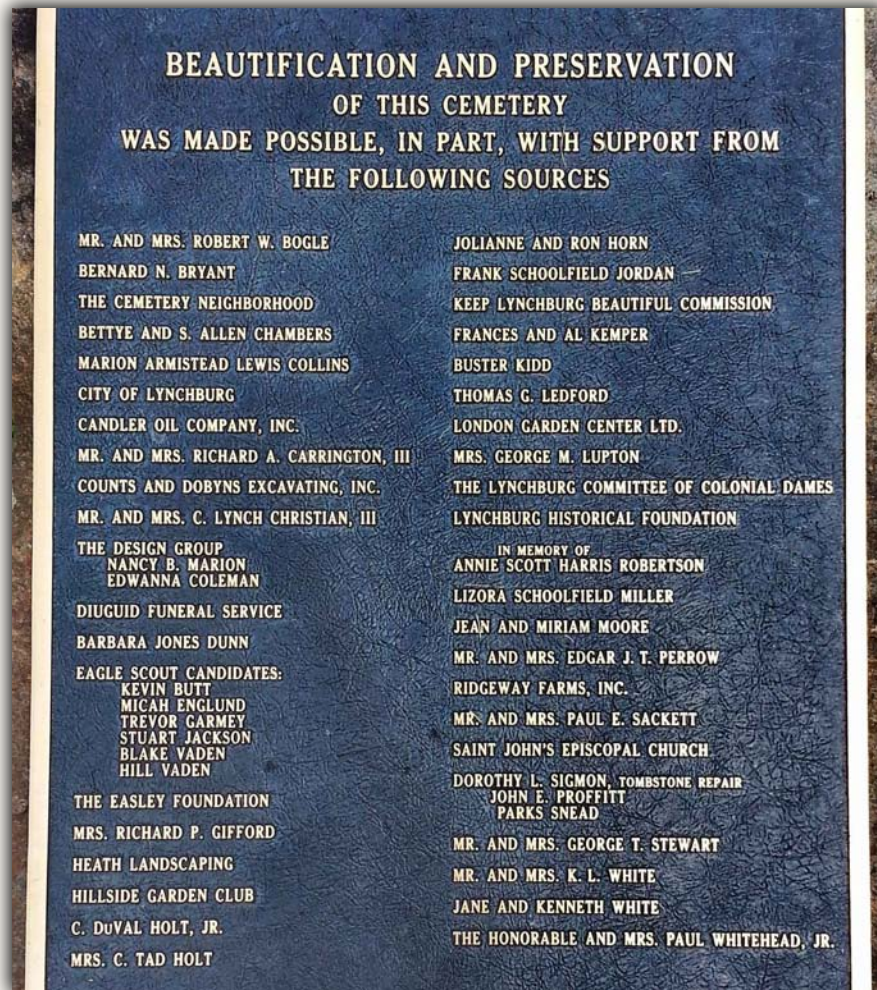
By 1995, White and SMA were on a roll, and the improvements kept coming with relentless succession. First the



Confederate Archway was restored, then the Gatehouse was built, then the Cemetery Center, and so on. It is hard to say exactly when the rehabilitation ended, but the first phase of the work was completed in 1995, and donors were acknowledged on a large bronze

plaque that can still be found not far inside the entrance gates.

The Storm of '93 is yet another reminder that good things often come from bad situations—and that sometimes it takes a difficult crisis to bring about positive change.



This large bronze plaque, dated 1995, acknowledges the donors and volunteers who made the Cemetery's first phase of rehabilitation possible.

Photo by Ted Delaney

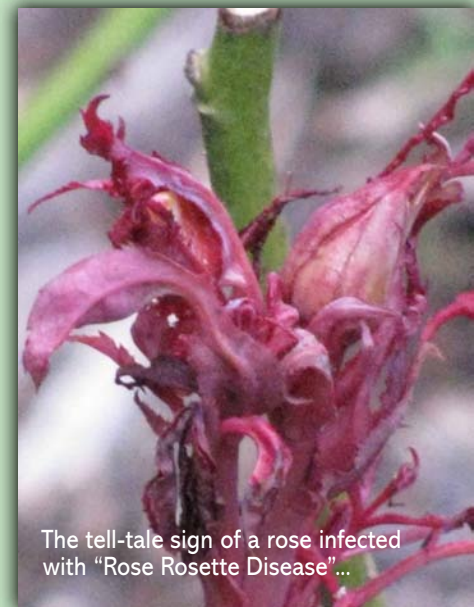
Horticultural Highlights

By Laurie McMinn

The dangerous “Rose Rosette” disease has been around since the 1940’s, but today it is becoming a major concern in both the horticultural industry and the Cemetery. Without constant monitoring, some of the most prized features in our Cemetery are in danger of extinction. Rose Rosette does not have any 100% successful chemical controls, and the most effective mechanical control is removal and burning.

We have seen rose rosette for several years in the Cemetery, mainly in climbers and ramblers. This includes the New Dawn living fence on Fourth Street and the last remaining Mermaid nearby in the second acre. Roses add immense character and beauty to the landscape, delighting visitors throughout the seasons. It would be a tragedy to lose them.

A small eriophyid mite introduces the virus into the plant. This mite only feeds on roses, and the multiflora rose is the primary host for the virus.



The tell-tale sign of a rose infected with “Rose Rosette Disease”...

The mites can be transported over 100 miles by wind, and are more active on warm, sunny days. The open wounds created by gardeners pruning, propagating, or grafting allow the virus to enter the rose more quickly, and it becomes systemic. Where the mites attack tender new tip growth and buds, the gardener can introduce the disease into larger canes, and decline is accelerated. Virus incubation from infection to symptoms happens in as few



as 17 days, or can overwinter and appear next growing season.

Symptoms of rose rosette vary between species and cultivars, but typical characteristics include witches' broom, lateral shoot elongation, bright red coloration on leaves, and distorted foliage and flowers in severe infections. Glyphosate (herbicide) damage can produce similar effects and can appear months after application. Herbicide can produce witches' broom and make changes to foliage, but one difference is the foliage usually appears yellow in the leaf clusters.

Preventing Rosette Disease

Good horticulture practices can help prevent spreading rose rosette. Here are some recommendations from Star/Conard-Pyle, a large industry rose grower:

- Identify rose rosette in your garden. Weekly inspections are necessary since it develops in as few as 17 days.
- Work on 'clean' plants before addressing diseased ones as mites can be carried on clothing, tools, gloves and pets.
- Dip clippers in alcohol between cuts on infected plants and clean tools at end of work day. This virus doesn't spread by cuts, but by moving mites on tools.
- Bag all cuttings and put out for trash or burn. **DO NOT COMPOST!**
- Heavy pruning should be done when roses are dormant in late winter before new growth appears.
- Removing the upper portion of leaves has been found to reduce the disease significantly, as this is where most mites would be feeding.

How to Treat Roses Infected with Rosette Disease

Chemical

- Spraying horticultural oil before the temperatures get warm is effective on all mites.
- Lime sulfur spray also works to block oxygen.
- Sevin acts systemically and would not need to be applied as frequently.

Biological

- Yellow thrips
- Ladybird beetles
- Anthocorid bugs
- Fungi (*Hirsutella thompsoni*)

Mechanical

- Winter pruning
- Tip pruning (yes, there go all your buds)
- Removal of the plant is recommended when symptoms are found in more than 50% of plant.
- Roots can harbor the virus, so another healthy rose planted in same location may develop the disease.

Source: *Greenhouse Grower*, February 4, 2013
Copies of the entire report are on file in the office.

Volunteer Spotlight

Mae Ruth Raymaker

Mae Ruth Raymaker has been a tireless worker for the Old City Cemetery for quite a while. The earliest records we found show Mae Ruth began as gravegardener and special events volunteer in early 2004. As a gravegardener, Mae Ruth adopted a plot across from the Hearse House and her first event here was the spring Rose Festival.

Mae Ruth worked on other special events year round and she also became a Mourning Room docent along the way. When Dawn Wise was on maternity leave, Mae Ruth worked in the office on anything that might have been an assignment of Dawn's. We also call her at the last minute and are grateful she is able to assist us on such short notice.

Now Mae Ruth continues most of her volunteering in a behind the scenes position. In the summer of 2011 she "tackled" her latest assignment head on. Using military records found online at *Fold3.com*, Mae Ruth is now identifying the causes of death of all 2,200 Civil War soldiers buried here. It is a painstakingly tedious



process, yet she continues this project year round.

Among the over 100 volunteers here at OCC, Mae Ruth logged the most hours of any volunteer in the year ending June 30, 2013: a total of 223 hours! Our staff recognizes and appreciates her contributions and look forward to having her as a part of volunteer team for many years to come. Well done Mae Ruth!

News & Notes

Calling All Actors!

Old City Cemetery is looking for professional actors to portray Cemetery "residents" for its Sixth Annual Candlelight Tours. The dates this year are October 17-19 and October 24-26. There are auditions and rehearsals, and actors must be available for all of these dates. Character list and scripts will be provided. A stipend will be paid for the six nights of work. Our website will have further details (gravegarden.org), or call 434-847-1465.

Candlelight Tours Tickets

Candlelight Tours tickets go on sale August 1. Please visit the

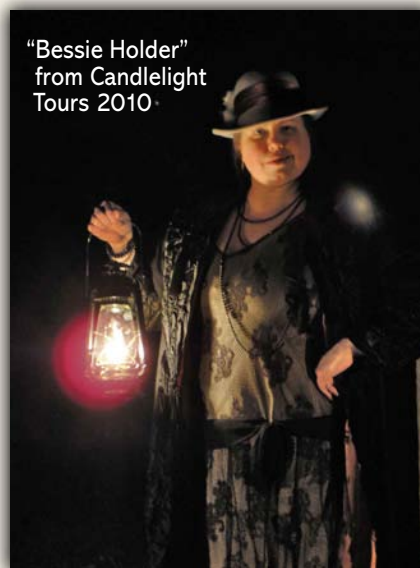
Cemetery's website to purchase online, or visit the Cemetery Center to pay in person.

OCC Featured in NYC Magazine

Independent blog writer Demetra M. Pappas from New York City visited Lynchburg recently and visited OCC. She also took the time to review the Cemetery's two cookbooks. In the July issue of New York's *Resident* magazine she wrote an article titled, "A Revolutionary Tour of Central Virginia: The Homes of Jefferson and Monroe and the Home Battle Field." Our site and the cookbooks are referenced in the article. The magazine has a circulation of 250,000. Find the online version of the article here: <http://resident.com/2013/07/08/a-revolutionary-tour-of-central-virginia-the-homes-of-jefferson-and-monroe-and-the-home-battle-field/>

New Public Works Director

Congratulations to Cemetery Board member Gaynelle Hart, who was named the City's new Director of Public Works, effective



"Bessie Holder"
from Candlelight
Tours 2010

News & Notes

July 1, 2013. Public Works is the City department with which SMA is most closely affiliated, and the Cemetery's groundskeepers are Public Works employees. Hart has been involved in the management of the Cemetery grounds since the 1990s.

Honey Is Harvested!

Fresh from our hives—"Died and Gone to Heaven Pure Honey" is now available for purchase at the Cemetery Center!



Dragonfly Spotted at OCC
Photo by Laurie McMinn

Lynchburg Bird Club Contribution

The Lynchburg Bird Club has donated four new bluebird houses and poles. Two of the houses were replacements. The club monitors the Cemetery bird houses on its monthly walks. Newcomers are always welcome on the walks on the third Thursday of each month at 8:30 a.m.

Cemetery Road Update

The next phase of road construction is almost completed. This is the section between the cobblestone and the entrance to the Center. A new retaining wall is under construction in front of the Pest House. The resurfacing will be done shortly between the cobblestone and the Station House.

Arts & Humanities Council Honors OCC

Old City Cemetery was named the 2013 winner of the James River Council for the Arts & Humanities "Cultural Organization Award." This award "recognizes distinguished creative accomplishments that significantly and consistently

influence the cultural life of Central Virginia." In particular OCC was honored "for its long service to the community and the creative interpretation of telling the fascinating history of the site, the individuals buried there, and the way of life represented." Mayor Michael Gillette presented the award in May at the Council's annual awards ceremony.



Photo by Robert Miller

Photos from Friends



This picture was taken by **Amy Firebaugh** of her son Landon Firebaugh on the swing hanging from the Cemetery's Pecan Tree. Amy is from Salem, Virginia, but whenever she visits relatives in Lynchburg, she likes to bring her family to the Cemetery.



Award-winning local photographer **Robert Miller** took this photograph early one morning this summer. He titled it "Morning Supermoon."

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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!