

HERITAGE GAZETTE

FALL 2018

ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF
HISTORIC CONGRESSIONAL CEMETERY

SUMMER VAULT PRESERVATION

If you're lucky enough to live in a historic house, you're familiar with the headaches and rewards that come hand-in-hand with owning a piece of history. Now imagine overseeing 35 acres of headstones that need to be maintained, restored, and preserved. Now add in two historic buildings, one dating to 1903 and one to the 1920s. Throw in a few dozen vaults and mausoleums, and you have Historic Congressional Cemetery.

All this to say, there is truth behind the mantra when HCC requests donations for

the preservation of our historic cemetery — there's a lot to preserve. This summer many of our vaults have been getting some much-needed attention. Grounds Conservation Manager Kymberly Mattern has been removing grass and dirt from vault roofs and repainting these roofs with a lime-based paint. The Public Vault doors received a refreshing new coat of paint, and thanks to the dedicated fundraising efforts of Gadsby's Tavern Museum, preservation on the Gadsby Vault is almost completed. For more on that project, please see page 8. Thank you for continuing to support Congressional Cemetery and our ongoing efforts to preserve this National Historic Landmark!

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1836 Lambell Vault



Kymberly Mattern applies paint to Public Vault roof.



Newly-painted Public Vault doors.

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

The record breaking warm weather and buckets of rain that soaked D.C. over the summer have left their mark on Historic Congressional Cemetery. Everything is remarkably green and lush. Given how rapidly everything is growing, our grounds conservation manager, Kymberly Mattern, has been busy keeping HCC's landscape in good order. And this year, she has lots of company. She's been joined by dozens of volunteers, each of whom has adopted one of the gravesites at HCC and planted a garden. It is such a pleasure to walk around the cemetery and see what people have done with the different plots. Each is unique, and together, the new gardens add immeasurably to the beauty of the cemetery. And these small gardens are likely to have an impact well beyond their borders. Kymberly has found the both the plots and their gardeners to be a great source of inspiration and ideas for landscaping in other parts of the cemetery.



To date, 58 people or organizations have adopted a plot—amazing growth given that only 11 were participating just a few years ago. There aren't many hard and fast rules—no invasive species and gardeners must consult with Kymberly before planting any trees. Other than that, the gardeners have free rein. This has yielded a lot of creativity, while also beautifying the graves and plots of people who don't receive a lot of visitors.

People adopt plots for lots of reasons. Take Stacey Marien. Her partner sent her an article on grave gardeners in Philadelphia, which piqued her interest, and she tracked down the adopt-a-plot program at HCC. Last year, Stacey adopted the Arnold family plot – very near J. Edgar Hoover – and enjoyed planting the garden so much that she recently also took on the adjacent Cullinan plot. She has gotten some help from HCC's archivist Dayle Dooley as she explored the history of the Arnold family. Stacey has enjoyed the experience, explaining, "I've talked to many people over the summer who walk by - dog walkers, other adopt- a-plot people and people on a tour. It's fun. I like gardening, I like growing plants, and people seem to be happy looking at the garden."

There are plenty of plots left to plant, so if you are interested in adopting one, email Kymberly (kmattern@congressionalcemetery.org), or join us at the next adopt-a-plot happy hour, which will be scheduled later this fall. I've taken the plunge, and you will find me happily gardening on the Peake plot.

—Susan Urahn

Information for your estate planning, bequest, stock gift, endowment match, or donation:

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Legal Address: 1801 E Street, SE, Washington, DC 20003

Telephone: 202-539-0543

Tax ID Number: 52-1071828

Please contact us for wire instruction or banking information



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The Association for the Preservation of Historic Congressional Cemetery is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. All donations are deductible to the extent permitted by federal tax laws. Funding for the preservation and maintenance of Historic Congressional Cemetery is provided in part by the Congressional Cemetery Endowment, which was created with matching funds provided by the U.S. Congress and administered by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

As you can see from this edition of the newsletter, there has been quite a flurry of activity in the cemetery of late. We are thrilled with the completion of the restored front gate and new roadway that now makes a seamless entrance for both pedestrians and drivers alike. It was well worth the wait, and trust me, there is quite a bit going on underground to make the 30,000-pound gate open and close with a fingertip.

The staff and I have also been intrigued by the installation of the Brademas mausoleum over the past few months. It resembled an ancient Greek archeological site when the myriad granite pieces and columns were unloaded and spread out across the site – an incredible 60,000 pounds in total weight. It is certainly adds to the various historical markers and buildings built inside the cemetery over the past 211 years, and, constructed of solid granite from top to bottom, it is also built to last. Finishing touches yet to be completed include an intricate granite tile floor and a bronze gate.

We also received an unexpected fundraising gift from the Gadsby Tavern Museum in Alexandria that we matched to restore the famed John Gadsby Vault, which may have looked substantial from the exterior, but was in fact leaking badly and had suffered breakage in most of the interior marble marking plaques. It is now fully restored, and Grounds Conservation Kymberly Mattern has been working with the Boy Scouts to repair the roof of the Public Vault and several other vaults nearby. The interior of the Public Vault also got a much needed



Installation of the Brademas Mausoleum.

plaster and lime gloss coat and is ready to host a VIP area for our fall Soul Strolls.

We are also overlapping our current progress with new planning and design concepts for the conversion of a vacant mausoleum along mausoleum row, now that our structural engineering report is complete.

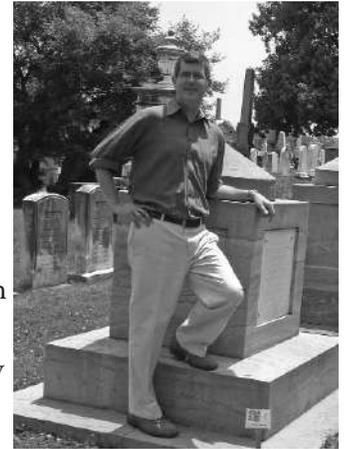
We will replace the leaking roof and demolish the non-historic interior to open up the space for future installation of cremation niches. Our third columbarium obelisk is now installed, and we are focusing on a ten-year plan for cremation sites and structures located throughout the cemetery.

Following a rather quiet August, the staff is gearing up for a major volunteer day on September 8, with upwards of 250 military members coming to accomplish such ambitious projects as the installation of new paths and walkways. Casey Trees has also once again accepted us as a recipient of a tree planting campaign that will enhance our east end, with numerous volunteer groups adding to specialty projects throughout our grounds.

Our events and programs continue to elicit fantastic press in the Washington Post and other national media outlets, and the famed Soul Strolls twilight tours over the course of two weekends in October is well on pace to sell out again this year, introducing the cemetery and its residents to nearly 1,400 people during the 2017 event alone.

I hope that you have the opportunity to attend one of our events or visit the cemetery the next time you are in the nation's capital.

—Paul K. Williams, President



DEAD MAN'S RUN

Another year of Dead Man's Run is upon us! This year's race is Saturday, October 6th at 5 pm. Join us for a haunting 5k run and walk in the cemetery and out along the adjacent Anacostia Trail. Costumes are encouraged but not required, although a sense of humor is essential. All registrants receive a t-shirt and a beer (must be 21+) thanks to our generous sponsors Fulcrum Properties and Constellation Brands. Don't miss this chance to show off and test out your Halloween outfits before the big day, as we'll have prizes for the best costumes! More information and registration for Dead Man's Run can be found at congressionalcemetery.org.



SOUL STROLLS

Trespass into the past and discover the secrets of some of Congressional Cemetery's "residents." Soul Strolls, the Cemetery's annual twilight tours, explore the stories of individuals buried here through guided tours and costumed interpreters. Experience the history of this hallowed ground exactly the way it should be experienced in October — in twilight and darkness, happening upon vignettes and individuals under the guidance of one of our "Dozen Decent Docents."





Our Public Vault will be transformed into “Circa 1807”, an early 19th-century soiree harkening back to the years that the cemetery was founded and DC was a new town. VIPs will be admitted to a cocktail party that Dolley Madison would have been proud to throw — and perhaps she’ll even make an appearance? Soul Strolls take place over four nights, October 19th -20th and October 26th-27th. More information and tickets can be found at congressionalcemetery.org.

YOGA MORTIS

Thanks to a generous grant from TKF, Yoga Mortis came back for the summer and fall of 2018. Instructor Kelly Carnes teaches these all-levels outdoor classes in the shadow of the TKF bench near the totem pole. Classes are free and interested yogis can find the full schedule at congressionalcemetery.org. Thanks to a prominent mention in a *Washington Post* article, recent Yoga Mortis classes have been fuller than ever, so come try out your corpse pose among dozens of like-minded souls!



SUMMER INTERN: ASIA ELLIOTT

We were delighted to host summer intern Asia Elliott this past July. Asia is a sophomore at Duke Ellington High School, and she is focusing her studies on vocal music. Over the course of the summer, her main project was assisting Archivist Dayle Dooley with a rehousing project in our archival vault. In addition, Asia was an enormous help with various administrative tasks around the office; moreover, we all miss her impromptu singing when she thought no one was listening. We wish Asia the best of luck this upcoming school year!

SUFFRAGISTS IN WASHINGTON, D.C.: THE 1913 PARADE AND THE RIGHT TO VOTE

BY REBECCA ROBERTS

*We're pleased to include an excerpt from HCC Board Member Rebecca Boggs Roberts' new book, *Suffragists in Washington, D.C.: The 1913 Parade and the Right to Vote*. We would be remiss if we did not say that signed copies of the book are for sale in the Congressional Cemetery gift shop. The best way in which to preface the excerpt and its relationship to Congressional Cemetery, however, comes from Rebecca's acknowledgments:*

I first came across the 1913 March in Washington, D.C. in 2010, when I was working at Historic Congressional Cemetery. It was the 90th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment, and I was trying to determine if there were enough suffragists buried at Congressional to create a special tour of their graves. As I combed through hundreds of obituaries, I found the 1913 march referenced again and again. Socialite hostess Marguerite DuPont Lee contributed money. Scholar Elizabeth Brown marched with the teachers, and testified in the Senate hearing that followed. Sculptor Adelaide Johnson marched with the artists, and was inspired to create the "Portrait Monument" that sits (finally!) in the Capitol Rotunda. Pioneering lawyer and 1884 presidential candidate Belva Lockwood held pride of place near the very front of the procession. This march formed a seminal moment in the lives of these women, just as it did for the entire suffrage cause. The tour that resulted, delightfully called "Uppity Women", is available for download on the cemetery's website. And although the role of the 1913 procession is dutifully acknowledged in histories of the American suffrage movement, it has been entirely forgotten in the context of protest marches on Washington. Marching on Washington, it seemed, was a spontaneous idea of the civil rights movement in the 1960s. The oversight has always bothered me.

EXCERPT:

Ten blocks up Pennsylvania Avenue, the parade was stalled. The spectators at 5th Street had spilled into the road, and there was no way for the marchers to proceed. Jane Burleson looked for the policemen who were supposed to escort her, and couldn't find them. From atop her horse, Burleson had a pretty good view down the Avenue, and what she saw was a "horrible, howling mob." Despite the assurances of the chief of police, the parade route was not clear, and it looked as though it would not become clear any time soon. And the thousands of spectators blocking the road were not all friendly. After all, most were men in town for the Wilson inauguration, scheduled for the next day. The suffrage parade was just a side show. Alice Paul realized her meticulously planned day was in danger of collapsing. She had put on academic robes, expecting to join her fellow Swarthmore alumnae in the college section. But now she and Lucy Burns got in a car, and drove slowly down the parade route ahead of the marchers, trying desperately to clear a path. As she drove, Paul saw boy scouts valiantly holding the crowd back in places, while the policemen did nothing. She saw drunken men yelling insults. She saw the crowd surge back into the marchers' way as soon as her car had passed.

There was nothing for it but to press on. Burleson



Inez Milholland at the 1913 suffrage parade. Image courtesy of George Grantham Bain Collection (Library of Congress).

and Milholland gamely led the way, stopping and starting, narrowing the march formation to single file where the spectators crowded the Avenue. The women began to feel increasingly threatened. Some of the marchers on horseback fought back, kicking out at the crowds with their boots. Some of the women on foot used batons and flags to push the more aggressive men back. Burleson and Milholland fought their way nine more blocks to 14th Street. But it was slow going, and the crowd was getting less orderly and more hostile. They were over an hour late for the pageant.

Meanwhile, President-elect Woodrow Wilson and his party arrived at the train station just a few blocks away. Only a modest crowd met them there. Apparently, Wilson asked, "Where are all the people?" The police answered, "watching the suffrage parade."

By now the crowd numbered in the hundreds of thousands. Finally, District officials literally called in the cavalry. The horseback troops standing by at Fort Myer met the head of the parade at 14th Street, and rode back up the parade route towards the Capitol, pushing the crowd back with their horses. They weren't gentle, but they were effective. As the *Washington Post* reported, "Their horses were driven into the

throngs and whirled and wheeled until hooting men and women were forced to retreat. A space was quickly cleared." The later sections of the parade had more room, but no more support from the crowd. They were jeered, grabbed, spat upon, shouted at, and tripped. Many policemen did nothing to control the crowd, and some even joined in their taunts. Inevitably, injuries occurred. The *Washington Post* described two ambulances that "came and went constantly for six hours, always impeded and at times actually opposed, so that doctor and driver literally had to fight their way to give succor to the injured." At least a hundred people were taken to the local emergency hospital.

Most of the marchers eventually made their way to Continental Hall. But instead of a triumphant capstone to a perfect day, the rally became a meeting of indignation and protest. Very little had gone according to plan. Helen Keller, who was scheduled to speak, was so frightened by the crowds at the grandstand that she could not participate. Every woman in the hall was some combination of filthy, battered, exhausted, unnerved, insulted, weepy, furious and freezing. Still in her academic robes, Alice Paul surveyed the room. And then she smiled. It was perfect. 



Rebecca Roberts



Conservation in progress on Gadsby Vault.

ensure that the mortar and the plaster does not contain any Portland cement. The emphasis on our conservation approach is to allow the building materials to breathe naturally.

Instead of restoring the vault, we are conserving the vault. Restoring

emphasizes the architectural significance of the Gadsby vault. There is evidence that suggests that work may have been done to preserve the Gadsby vault in the late 1980s or 1990s.

At the end of 2017 and the beginning of 2018, Gadsby's Tavern museum raised money to support the conservation of the Gadsby vault. Devlin McDonald of DMC Masonry Restoration has been contracted to work on the conservation of the vault. Our Grounds Conservation Manager, Kymberly, has also been assisting him in the conservation of the vault. The work began in the middle of July and should be completed by September.

The scope of work includes: repointing the granite walls, cleaning the interior and exterior of the vault, repairing and repainting the plaster on the interior of the vault, and repairing three broken marble panels. There are a few places where a patch repair is needed to fill voids or missing pieces of granite or marble, so a specialized product called Jahn will be used. We are using products and following methodologies that will minimize damage to the structure and its building materials. The new mortar will contain a mixture of colorants so that the mortar matches the original color of the mortar. We will also follow a historic formula to

the vault would entail removing any later additions or changes that were made to the vault. For example, all of the plaster on the interior of the vault would be removed if the vault were to be restored because the interior of the vault most likely did not originally have plaster; the plaster was likely added in the 1980s or 1990s. However, we have decided to keep the plaster and repair it in places where it is failing even though it is not original to the structure. This is for both cosmetic reasons and because, at this point, removing the plaster will likely cause more harm than good to the bricks.

One of the biggest challenges for this project involves removing black paint that has left stains on the marble panels on the interior. Originally, the marble panels probably were not originally painted. Someone likely went in and painted the inscriptions in order for the visitors to better read the names. While the person had good intentions, the paint has run down the marble panels and will prove difficult to remove, especially due to the soft nature of marble. A variety of products will be tested to see how they react with the marble. We hope that we are able to find a safe way to remove or at least minimize the appearance of the paint on the marble panels. 

BOOK CLUB CELEBRATES FIVE YEARS

BY LAUREN MALOY

If I'm being completely honest — which I've decided to be — Tombs and Tomes book club was started on a whim. My former colleague Margaret and I wanted to be a part of a book club, and after perusing programming and events at other cemeteries, I discovered that there was in fact precedent for this, such as the Boneyard Bookworms book club at Laurel Hill Cemetery. With approval and participation from my boss, and a promise that it wouldn't take up too much staff time, we searched for a whimsical name and began to recruit book club members. But since its admittedly selfish beginnings, Tombs and Tomes has grown beyond the bookish whims of a couple cemetery coworkers. Tombs and Tomes is still evolving, but for the most part, this programming mainstay is all grown up.

As luck would have it, the very first book club meeting coincided nicely with one of cemetery's admittedly much higher-profile events: the first visit of the goats in 2013. As the entire staff fielded interviews that August, a reporter perused our list of events and honed in on our first book club meeting. Looking back at the WTOP interview, it's both interesting and embarrassing to read between the lines — I didn't have a clear vision of what the book club would be, only that we would read macabre books and, well, discuss them. Luckily the reporter made it sound much better, and many of the attendees at the September 2013 meeting came because of that article.

Our first book selection was *Stiff*, by Mary Roach. It was a fitting selection for our off-the-wall book club, and it set the tone for our future meetings. From there on out, Tombs and Tomes primarily read non-fiction books, and we focused on the darker side of the genre: our early picks included *Devil in the White City* by Erik Larson, *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes & Other Lessons*

from the Crematory by Caitlin Doughty, and *Assassination Vacation* by Sarah Vowell. The book club still meets



every other month, and while I used to have to go through the “chore” of compiling a book list for members to vote on, now everyone sends more than enough recommendations to populate the voting ballots. We've even been lucky enough to have authors Skype in to our meetings (Hannah Nordhaus, writer of *American Ghost*, and Brady Carlson, writer of *Dead Presidents*, to name a couple) — and once, we even had the author show up to our meeting in person. We were all pleasantly surprised when author Sheri Booker showed up to talk about *Nine Years Under* in 2015.

Tombs and Tomes members have gone on to be Congressional Cemetery docents and volunteers, donors and event supporters - but honestly, that's almost beside the point, even if it's a wonderful side benefit. At its heart it's the purest kind of program, without pretense. Tombs and Tomes isn't a fundraiser, and it's certainly not the biggest program the Cemetery hosts, but it brings together an interesting group of people to discuss a unique selection of books, with a little wine and levity on the side. So in closing: happy birthday, Tombs and Tomes! Here's to another five years of cozy meetings about not-so-cozy subjects.

You can find out more about Tombs and Tomes, including our reading lists, at <http://bccemetery.wixsite.com/tombsandtomes>. 

WHAT IS FIND A GRAVE, EXACTLY?

BY DAYLE DOOLEY

Find A Grave was originally founded by Jim Tipton as a website to support his hobby of visiting the burial sites of famous people. Sometime after 2000, Find A Grave was opened to “ordinary” people. It has since morphed into the “world’s largest gravesite collection” with over 170 million memorials created since 1995, and was bought by Ancestry.com in 2013. It has always been a free website and according to Ancestry will continue to be free, but it is linked to Ancestry for those who subscribe.

In researching this article it is difficult to determine when the first memorial was added for Congressional Cemetery, but I can ascertain that Mathew Brady was added in January 2001. HCC has 287 “famous” memorials that are administered by Find A Grave. We currently have over 47,000 memorials with 44% photographed. Of course, we only have 14,000 stones for our over 65,000 burials, so many interred individuals do not have headstones.

To add memorials all one has to do is sign up and start! You find the cemetery or search for a name you’re interested in, whether family members or famous people - or really anyone. Many volunteers “mow the rows,” meaning they go to a cemetery, photograph every stone, and then go home to upload and transcribe them. Duplicates are becoming rare as the newly redesigned site shows you if you are adding someone with the same name.

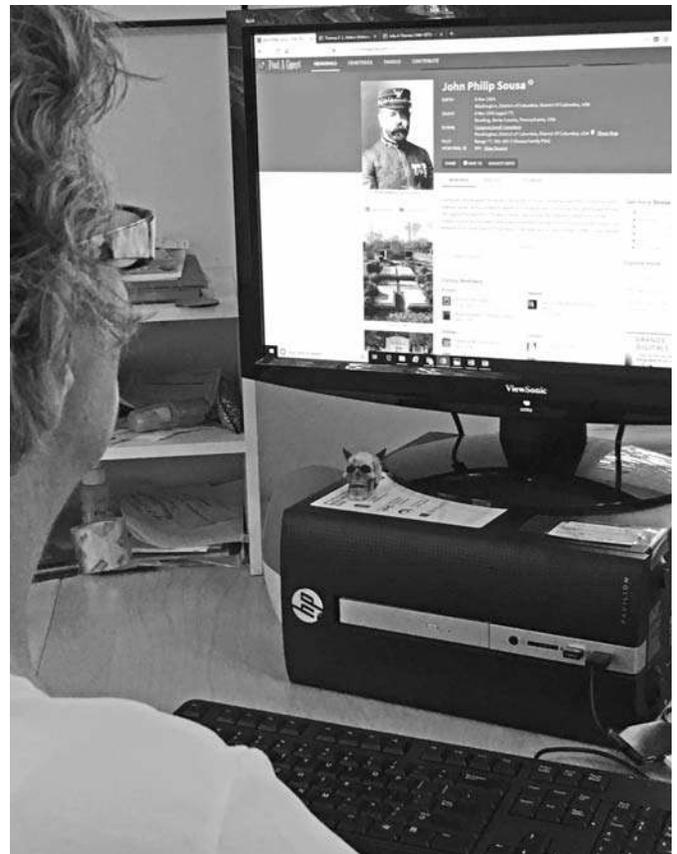
I joined in Find A Grave in 2003 to add family members I found in my genealogy searches. I started volunteering at Congressional Cemetery in 2007 and started as the archivist in 2009. Since that time HCC has added more than 12,000 new memorials to the website, while also adding photos to existing ones. We continue to add memorials and answer requests for

photos and add additional information. We also transfer administration of any memorial to people who are related or interested in our resident.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the volunteers of Find A Grave.

We are also fortunate to have photos taken in the late 1990’s by Jim Oliver (former Board member) of all the stones and obituaries collected over the years by our historian, Sandy Schmidt, as well as contributions from family members.

To learn more and start searching, visit <https://www.findagrave.com/>. 



Yes!

I want to help preserve and restore Congressional Cemetery with a tax deductible donation.

\$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 \$250 Other _____

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Thank you!

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| October 6 | Dead Man's Run |
| October 13 | LGBT Tour |
| October 19, 20, 26, 27 | Soul Strolls |
| November 6 | John Philip Sousa's
Birthday |
| November 13 | Tombs and Tomes Book
Club |

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(Weird Al 2009-)

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