



Our Nation's Capital's German-American Cemetery

www.prospecthillcemetery.org

2201 North Capitol Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002-1103 (202) 667-0676

Summer - Fall

Newsletter

2009

AREA GARDEN CLUBS TO BEGIN MAJOR BEAUTIFICATION PROJECT NEXT MONTH AT PROSPECT HILL

A major beautification project is scheduled to begin next month at our historic Prospect Hill Cemetery. The project came about through the efforts of Christine Hambach, president of the Goddard Garden Club, a member of District 1 of the National Capital Area Garden Clubs, Inc.

The NCAGC is comprised of 20 clubs in the District of Columbia and Prince George's County, Maryland, and is associated with the National Garden Clubs, Inc., the largest volunteer gardening organization on the planet. NCAGC Website: <http://gardencentral.org/ncafgc>.

For many years Christine has cared for the Prospect Hill graves of five deceased members of the Washington Saengerbund choral group of which she is also a member. A life-long gardener, she has planted flowers on their graves and tended them during all seasons of the year.

And under Christine's leadership, members of her Goddard Garden Club each year have planted and taken care of the small garden surrounding the memorial plaque in the center of the circle where the Prospect Hill chapel once stood. The plaque was erected by the German-American Heritage Society in 1997.

The NCAGC awards an annual grant to several projects sponsored by member clubs. In 2008, Christine and her Goddard Garden Club suggested a project to install horticulture (shrubs, trees and other plants) at Prospect Hill Cemetery to screen the unsightly maintenance yard across the fence on the cemetery's northern boundary.

The proposal was presented to the NCAGC District I Board of Directors in November 2008. Its members finally voted to undertake the project as their primary 2009 community project. The project was named the Memorial Grove. Approximately 32 items of horticulture will be planted along the northern fence line behind the two existing grand beech trees and to the left (west) of a row of existing ornamental cherry trees.

The azalea plants donated by lot owners two years ago to form the original Memorial Gardens will be transplanted into the new Memorial Garden.

The new project is a partnership between District I and Prospect Hill Cemetery. District I has developed the planting plan, chose the horticulture to be planted and solicited proposals from commercial nurseries. It has raised about \$2000 from member garden clubs including a \$500 grant from the NCAGC, and expects members of the several garden clubs to provide labor to do the installation.

Prospect Hill also received a \$500 grant from the German Embassy in Washington for the project, and is providing on-site project management, site preparation to remove an old asphalt driveway, mechanized equipment for digging, moving materials, manpower and ongoing care after installation.

The planting plan developed by District 1 proposes the planting of the following 32 trees and shrubs:

- 3 Ilex opaca (American holly)
- 5 Aucuba japonica (Japanese spotted laurel)
- 3 Nandina domestica (Heavenly bamboo)
- 5 Mahonia aquafolium (Oregon-grape)
- 5 Photinia x faseri (Fraser's photinia)
- 3 Prunus Laurocerasus (Otto Luyken Cherry laurel)
- 5 Taxus x media (Hick's yew)
- 3 Viburnum Calesii (Cayuga)

The schedule for implementing the project is as follows:

1. Develop landscape plan and horticulture specifications – Now Complete
2. Obtain proposals from commercial nurseries – Now Complete
3. Site preparation to remove asphalt driveway – Planned for this month
4. Install horticulture – Primary Dates
 - i. Thursday, September 17, 2009 –horticulture delivered to site
 - ii. Friday, September 18, 2009 - dig planting holes
 - iii. Saturday, September 19, 2009 – install horticulture
5. Install horticulture – Rain Dates
 - i. Thursday, October 7 - 8, 2009 – horticulture delivered to site
 - ii. Friday, October 9, 2009 - dig planting holes
 - iii. Saturday, October 10, 2009 – install horticulture

We should be very proud that District I of the National Capital Area Garden Clubs has chosen Prospect Hill as the site of its 2009 community project and do everything in our power to insure that it is successfully carried out and maintained as an asset to the cemetery.

Volunteers are needed to help with the installation and support the workers. Here's an opportunity to involve your children and grandchildren in a fun and worthwhile project at Prospect Hill. They may even be able to gain community service credits from their schools by participating. Please contact Rudy Becker at 540-308-5965 or email:rbecker2004@yahoo.com for information.

HEAVY RAINS, HIGH WINDS KEEP CARETAKER JOE CONNELL BUSY

With reoccurring downpours and high winds the last couple months it's been a busy summer so far for our Superintendent – caretaker – groundskeeper Joe Connell. The off and on heavy showers have almost made the grass grow overnight, says Joe. He's been making a full cutting of the cemetery practically every week.

"It's been an exceptional year for grass," he added. Joe also mentioned that the wear and tear on the mowers may force us to buy a new one soon.

The high winds last month (July) slashed many large branches from some tall, old trees. Joe used a chain saw to cut them into small chunks which he loaded into a dumpster. Just clearing the ground of other small limbs and twigs has also been a time consuming chore.

Joe clears the base of every gravestone in the cemetery with a weed-whacker to rid them of a fast-growing grass. The large mowers do not cut close to the base. Besides all of these extra tasks, Joe has tended to the usual office business, sold a few books about the cemetery, greeted and helped visitors, and continued his ongoing task of uprighting and straightening smaller gravestones as best he can.

What would we do without you, Joe!!?

A PERFECT DAY FOR OUR ANNUAL MEETING

It was a glorious spring day with the temperature in the mid-70s. A gentle, cool breeze flowed through the giant cedars guarding one side of the old chapel site making the day even more pleasant.

What a delightful morning (Saturday, May 30) to hold our annual lot owners' meeting with the Board of Trustees. About 30 folks were present enjoying the perfect weather, listening to the chairpersons of the various committees give their reports, and later enjoying the refreshments served on the lawn of the old gatehouse.

Several guests then strolled throughout the well-kept, beautiful grounds of our cemetery pointing out the graves of friends and relatives. Our thanks go out to our devoted superintendent and caretaker, Joe Connell, who outdid himself in preparing our cemetery to look its best for the big day. We appreciate your efforts, Joe.

Board of Trustees President Carol Holler opened the meeting at 11 a.m. and welcomed everyone. Trustee Mary Anne Probus followed with a reading from scripture (Psalm 121). Everyone then joined in reciting the pledge of allegiance to the flag. Minutes of last year's annual meeting were read by Secretary Liz Becker.

Connell was then introduced. He remarked how he enjoyed working in the cemetery and appreciated the Board and lot owners' support. The committee chairpersons then began giving their reports.

The main topic of the day was the exciting news of the upcoming major beautification project explained elsewhere in this newsletter. Treasurer Rudy Becker gave an excellent progress report on it along with drawings of how it will look when completed. Another item of discussion was the stepping down of two Board members and the introduction of their replacements.

The meeting adjourned just about lunch time so everyone headed for the refreshment table.

ZERO INTERMENTS SINCE THE LAST NEWSLETTER

Superintendent Connell reports there have been no funerals in Prospect Hill since the printing of our Spring Newsletter in April. And that there have been only three since January 1st. The cemetery is depending more and more on donations to keep it the beautiful, historic landmark that it is today.

JEAN CRABILL AND LIZ BECKER STEP DOWN AS BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEMBERS. SUCCESSORS ARE NAMED

Jean Crabill, who knows more about the history of Prospect Hill than any other person, and Liz Becker, wife of Prospect Hill treasurer Rudy Becker, stepped down as members of the Board of Trustees at the lot owners meeting.

Crabill, a 10-year Board member, moved to Fairfield, Ohio, four years ago to be near her daughter, but “attended” most monthly Board meetings by conference calls. She returned “home” once a year to attend the annual lot owners meeting.

In her letter of resignation to Board president Carol Holler Jean commented: “I am old, I am tired and I don’t feel as well as I did before my two hospitalizations last winter. And I don’t believe that Board membership via telephone works as well as having a warm body in the cemetery office once a month.”

Jean is Prospect Hill’s historian. She has written two books on the history and families of Prospect Hill and co-authored two others with Board president Carol Holler on the cemetery’s adult burial list and children’s burial list. All books are still available for sale. Call the cemetery office for information or fill out the order form on page 7.

A native Washingtonian, Jean was born in the old National Homeopathic Hospital 75 years ago. She has 12 relatives buried in Prospect Hill including her grandparents. In her 10 years as trustee Jean also served, at various times, as secretary, treasurer, assistant and makeup editor of the Newsletter. She was also the driving force in getting Prospect Hill classified as an historic landmark by the District of Columbia’s Historic Preservation Board.

Jean concluded her letter of resignation with a request. “I’m not planning to disappear entirely. If it meets with Board approval, I would like to continue my work as historian. I thoroughly enjoy my contacts with people seeking history, and believe I am able to make a contribution in this way.” You can contact her at 513-895-0205 or email jbcrabill@aol.com.

The Board unanimously approved her request.

Jean's successor on the Board is Edith Gill, also born in Washington but lives in the historic town of Clifton, Virginia. Edith also has many relatives buried in Prospect Hill and graciously has supplied the refreshments at the last four annual meetings.

"I lived near the cemetery when I was growing up and used to play and ride my bike there," she reminisced. Edith, 64, is an accounts general supervisor for a property management company. "It's an honor to help serve the cemetery," she said.

Liz Becker says she needs time off for herself after taking care of her ailing sister for many years who died recently of cancer and other medical problems. The Beckers live in Locust Grove, Virginia, outside of Fredericksburg. "It's a long trip back and forth to D.C.," she added.

Her successor is Gerhard Meinzer, 73, a longtime friend of the Beckers who recently bought a plot at Prospect Hill. Born in Germany, Gerhard came to America in 1961 and now lives in Hyattsville, Maryland. He is involved in many area German-American activities.

He is president of the Association of German-American Societies of Greater Washington, D.C. and the German Masonic Lodge #25. Gerhard is a retired stonemason and worked on several important downtown D.C. buildings.

We welcome Edith and Gerhard to our Board of Trustees and thank Jean and Liz for their devotion, support and many contributions to the Board that have helped keep Prospect Hill Cemetery the beautiful, historic landmark of today.

PROSPECT HILL BURIAL INFORMATION AVAILABLE WITHOUT CHARGE

Much information contained in cemetery records about those buried in Prospect Hill is now available without charge. If you have questions about those interred here, please contact Jean Crabill at 513-895-0205 or jbcrabill@aol.com. She will be glad to help you as best she can.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

THANKS, WELCOME AND A REMINDER

Next month the new Memorial Grove project that will shield the unsightly view at the upper end of Prospect Hill will get underway. What a glorious beautification project it's going to be.

I personally want to thank members of The National Capital Area Garden Clubs, Inc. who participated in this project by donating to the cause. Christine Hambach, president of the Goddard Garden Club, is to be especially commended for presenting the idea to the NCAGC many months ago. Many, many thanks, Christine.

Welcome and congratulations to the two newly appointed trustees, Edith Gill and Gerhard Meinzer. We'll be expecting many new ideas from them in the future on the upkeep, fund raising and beautification of our historic cemetery. But let's not forget their predecessors, Jean

Crabill and Liz Becker, whose contributions and devotion to the betterment of our cemetery were outstanding.

Kudos also to our superintendent-caretaker Joe Connell. He outdid himself in getting the cemetery looking in tip-top shape for the annual meeting. Joe loves the cemetery --- and we love you, Joe.

A reminder, our next Newsletter, scheduled for November, will be our annual Holiday issue emphasizing contributions to our Year-End Memorial Fundraising Campaign.

Undoubtedly many of you are already receiving pleas from charitable organizations rewarding you with calendars, note pads, oodles of address labels etc. for your generosity in giving to their cause.

As you know, our Year-End Memorial Fundraising Campaign is more personal than all those others – no gimmicks or gifts attached. All contributions go entirely toward the upkeep, expenses and beautification of your loved one's final resting place. Think about it!

Start saving now for your memorial gift in honor of your departed loved one(s). Your continuous financial support of Prospect Hill Cemetery is greatly appreciated.

Carol Holler, President
Phone: 703-451-0836
Email: cmcholler@msn.com

HOW DO YOU LIKE OUR NEW LOOK?

With the retirement of our former associate and makeup editor of the Newsletter, Jean Crabill, from the Board of Trustees, Treasurer Rudy Becker volunteered to take over her duties. This is his first effort. How do you like it? Send him an email at rbecker2004@yahoo.com or write him at 2608 Lakeview Parkway, Locust Grove, VA 22508 and express your views.

And while you're at it, do you have any ideas or suggestions (or complaints) concerning the upkeep, expenses, fundraising, or beautification of our cemetery? We'd like to hear from you. Again, email or write to Rudy Becker. All messages will be considered.

The Newsletter is produced by the Board of Trustees of Prospect Hill Cemetery, 2201 North Capitol St., NE, Washington, DC 20002
Henry Fankhauser, Editor

Prospect Hill Cemetery

Order Form

Your gifts are very important to the operation of the Cemetery. Each donation, no matter how large or small, makes a difference. We will work to keep expenses down, and with your help we'll continue to have a beautiful historic cemetery. One of the nicest things you can give to your ancestors is a donation to Prospect Hill Cemetery for the maintenance and upkeep of their final resting place. Thank you for your love and concern.

My donation for the maintenance and operation of the Cemetery \$ _____

Books for sale

of books

_____ The Immigrants and Their Cemetery: The Story of Prospect Hill (\$30) \$ _____

_____ Families of Prospect Hill (\$20) \$ _____

_____ Prospect Hill Cemetery Adult Burial List (\$35) \$ _____

_____ Prospect Hill Cemetery Children's Burial List (\$20) \$ _____

Total number of books _____

\$5 postage times number of books \$ _____

Total amount of order and donation \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Make checks payable to **Prospect Hill Cemetery**, and mail this full sheet with your donation and book order to:

Prospect Hill Cemetery
c/o Rudolph Becker, Treasurer
2608 Lakeview Parkway
Locust Grove, VA 22508

All correspondence should be made to the address above. Thank you for your support of Prospect Hill.

PLEASE CALL FIRST AND MAKE AN APPOINTMENT

At times, folks have entered the cemetery unannounced seeking help or direction from Superintendent Connell, and found no one at home. Since he is our only employee, sometimes his duties take him away from the cemetery. He suggests you call first and make an appointment. This way he can prepare for your visit and give you his undivided attention. He will be glad to help you in any way. The office number is 202-667-0676

Phone: 202-667-0676

Website: www.prospecthillcemetery.org



PROSPECT HILL CEMETERY

c/o Rudolph H Becker
2608 Lakeview Parkway
Locust Grove, VA 22508