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Prospect Hill Cemetery

Our Nation's Capitol's German-American Cemetery

Summer-Fall

Newsletter

2011

LEAKING ROOF, DETERIORATING EAVES AND RUSTED GUTTERS ON THE OLD GATEHOUSE NEED REPLACING NOW - A COSTLY PROJECT!

During the heavy rains we experienced this past winter and spring; it became clear that we can no longer put off replacing the roof on the old gatehouse, residence of Superintendent Joe Connell. During one severe storm, water was seen dripping from the ceiling and Superintendent Connell had all he could do to keep up with it by placing pots and pans under each drip. Built in 1927, the house is 84 years old.

In addition to the leaking roof, the woodwork at the eaves has deteriorated to the point where collapse is imminent in many places. And the rain gutters have declined to the point where they are underperforming.

Therefore, we will undertake to replace the roof, eaves, fascia boards and rain gutters this year, in the fall. We expect the cost to be about \$75,000.

We have begun the process by identifying qualified contractors and developing a work scope for the project. Over the next 4 to 6 weeks, we expect to obtain bids, select a contractor and award a contract.

In order to minimize the need to liquidate assets in our investment portfolio, income from which is used for cemetery operations, we encourage increased generosity in making donations for this special project.

WITH YOUR HELP LET'S MAKE OUR INTERESTING WEBSITE EVEN MORE INTERESTING

Have you checked out our Website recently? New items are added periodically. Learn about some of the interesting people buried in Prospect Hill. Or read about our cemetery and the Civil War. There's a list of more than 100 Civil War soldiers buried there.

If you missed a recent issue of our Newsletter, archives of back issues can also be found along with a list of area German-American organizations.

If during visits to our beloved cemetery you've taken photos or snapshots of the grounds, tombstones, or during special occasions such as the annual meeting, why not share them for display on our Website. Please send all items to Rudy Becker, 2608 Lakeview Parkway, Locust Grove, VA 22508. Or email him at rbecker2004@yahoo.com.

Any historic document such as old sales slips for tombstones or grave sites would also be interesting items. Let's make our Website as informative and interesting as possible.

OUR 300 - FOOT FENCE ALONG BRYANT STREET ALLEY REPAIRED AFTER COMPLAINTS BY NEIGHBORS. COST, \$5,500

On Tuesday, March 29, 2011. President Carol Holler, Trustee Becker and Superintendent Connell met with James Fournier of the Advisory Neighborhood Commission 5C of the Government of the District of Columbia, to discuss neighborhood complaints about the condition of the fence along the cemetery boundary abutting the Bryant Street Alley.

Mr. Fournier is the elected commissioner for several neighborhoods in the vicinity of Prospect Hill along North Capitol Street. His job is to resolve issues among and between the residents and businesses in these areas.

The specific complaint about our fence was that it had deteriorated considerably over the years to the point that it no longer provided an adequate barrier between the alley and the cemetery. It was overgrown with vines and had been pushed over in several places where attempts to dump junk onto cemetery grounds had occurred. The community wanted the fence repaired.

We countered that it appeared to us that damage to the fence had resulted from failure by neighbors in preventing attempts to dump junk over the fence.

In the spirit of cooperation with the community and in compliance with our need to restore security along the alley, we agreed to repair the fence. Mr. Fournier indicated that he would attempt to influence the DC Police Department to increase patrols in the alley.

Several proposals were obtained from local fence companies and a contract was awarded in the amount of \$5,500 to repair the 300-foot fence. The work included removing vegetation along the fence, resetting and replacement of fence posts, reinforcement of fence posts with angle bracing imbedded in concrete foundations, reinstallation/replacement of chain link fabric, and closing of a gap between the fence and an adjacent home.

Although the cemetery incurred a substantial cost, we hope that this gesture will go a long way to improving relations with our neighbors. We feel that keeping the cemetery in tip-top shape enhances it's standing in the community by showing respect for neighbors' desires to maintain property values and will engender a spirit of cooperation in the neighborhood.

HAVE A STORY TO TELL? LET'S HEAR FROM YOU

Do you have an interesting story related to a loved one buried at Prospect Hill you'd like to share with our readers – like Mrs. Little's article on her grandfather's experiences in the Civil War (See page 3)? If so, we'd like to hear from you. Jot down your story and send it to us. We'd be glad to consider it for a future Newsletter.

Or if you have any ideas or suggestions (or complaints) concerning the upkeep, expenses, marketing or beautification of our cemetery we'd like to hear from you, too. Write us at the cemetery's address or email us at rbecker2004@yahoo.com

GRANDDAUGHTER OF A CIVIL WAR VET BURIED IN PROSPECT HILL WRITES OF HIS WAR EXPERIENCES IN HER HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

Our late historian at Prospect Hill, Jean Crabill, wrote the following in one of her research papers about Civil War veterans buried at Prospect Hill:

“The Union army allowed immigrants to form their own units, elect their own officers and speak their native language. In Washington, D.C. this was the 8th Battalion, especially Company A. of the DC Volunteers for infantry. President Abraham Lincoln referred to them as his “faithful Germans” and selected them to be his guards at his inauguration in March 1861.

“We know of nearly 200 civil War veterans who now rest at Prospect hill. More than half lived in Washington and served in the 8th Battalion. At one time they were stationed at Great Falls to protect the waterworks which supplied Washington with water.”

Thanks to Mrs. Elizabeth Little of Shelburne, Vermont, we learned about one of those 8th Battalion soldiers, Louis Kettler, her grandfather. Mrs. Little wrote the following letter to our treasurer, Rudy Becker, along with a check (she’s a faithful annual donor to Prospect Hill) and clippings of articles she wrote for her hometown newspaper, the South County Sentinel, about her grandfather’s Civil War experiences.

Dear Mr. Becker

I enclose my check toward the upkeep of the Prospect Hill Cemetery and my grandfather’s grave. I also enclose newspaper stories which I hope you will put in the cemetery’s archives for future generations. Thank you for all the work and interest you have in the cemetery at Prospect Hill. ELIZABETH B. LITTLE

The interesting text of one of her articles:

Looking back: A memory of Abraham Lincoln on his birthday, Feb. 12

**By Betty Little
Sentinel Correspondent**

This is a story about Abraham Lincoln and my grandfather, Louis Kettler of Washington, D.C., 1840-1925. Grandfather was a Civil War veteran.

“I walked in President Lincoln’s inaugural parade. I was in the theater when he was shot, and I marched in his funeral procession,” he proudly repeated many times to his seven children and their children.

Kettler was 21 when he volunteered in the Eighth Battalion District of Columbia Infantry and was deployed to guard the water supply of Washington.

It was there that he was wounded in a scrimmage, and lost his hearing. He was honorably discharged on April 11, 1861.

An amateur historian writing in 1923 about memories of Civil War veterans quoted my grandfather:

“I was walking down the street and I met my sister. I told her I had tickets to Ford Theater that night, would she like to go.

“We met at the theater. That was the night the President was shot.”

Abraham Lincoln brought my grandfather a sandwich on a cold winter night, according to those 1923 recorded memories.

The President frequently walked out after “supper” at the White House. He passed the Treasury building which is close by.

One night grandpa was on guard at the Treasury. The President came up to him and gave him a sandwich. Both saluted and the President walked on into the night.

When the old soldier died at age 85 he was getting a Civil War wounded veteran pension of \$50 a month, up from an original \$6 monthly.

301 M Street, N.W., is now a home for elderly black women. His tombstone is in Prospect Hill Cemetery which he helped found for Civil War veterans and their families.

Betty Little is a correspondent to the South County Sentinel and lives at Wake Robin in Shelburne with her husband, George.

DEDICATION OF NEW FLAGPOLE AND RAISING OF THE NEW FLAG. HIGHLIGHT MEMORIAL DAY ACTIVITIES

It was another memorable Memorial Day celebration (Monday, May 30) at Prospect Hill. The three events that day, all held at the top of the hill where the old chapel once stood, were highlighted by the dedication of our new flagpole and flag.

Board of Trustees president Carol Holler opened the day's activities by conducting our annual lot owners meeting during which all committee chairpersons gave their annual reports and all seven trustees were voted in for another two-year term. The meeting was followed by a delicious lunch and snacks.

Next came the dedication of the new flag and flagpole. Because it was such a hot day everyone agreed to hold the ceremony in the shade of the trees right there on the hill where the flag, blowing in the breeze, could be seen below.

President Holler opened the ceremony by requesting all to place their hand over their heart and repeat the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. The pledge was led by Trustee Gerhard Meinzer and followed by the Washington Saengerbund, the professional German choral group, singing our National Anthem, The Star Spangled Banner.

After a few well-chosen words commemorating the flag ceremony, President Holler introduced Pastor Tabea Muenz of the United Church who concluded the program with an appropriate prayer.

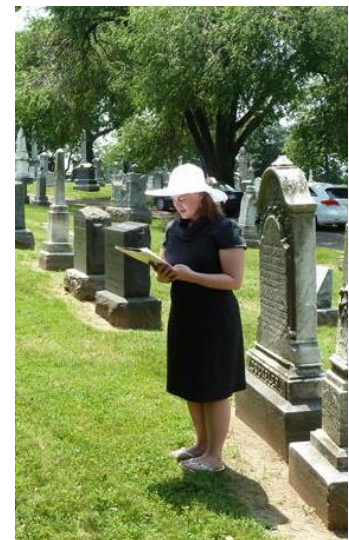
That led into the day's final main event, the annual Memorial Day service. President Holler again welcomed everyone, then invited Pastor Muenz to deliver the opening prayer. She was followed by the Saengerbund's singing of "Sanctus" by Franz Schubert.

Trustee Rudy Becker, our treasurer, gave a historical perspective of Prospect Hill after which the Saengerbund sang an old German favorite, "Wanderers Nachtlid" (Wayfarer's Night Song), also by Franz Schubert. Their final presentation, "Morgengebet" (Morning Prayer), by Mendelssohn, followed Pastor Meunz's inspiring Memorial Day message. She closed the service with a blessing for all.

Thus ended another historic day at Prospect Hill Cemetery.



Saengerbund performs during Service



Pastor Tabea Muenz

CLEAN UP DAY AT THE CEMETERY

Over a dozen lot owners and friends of Prospect Hill met at the cemetery on Saturday, May 21, 2011 to spruce up the place for the upcoming lot owners meeting and Memorial Day service.

The volunteers raked leaves along the walkway running from the house to the Memorial Grove, trimmed tree branches overhanging all walkways in the cemetery, weeded gardens and gravesites near the circle at the top of the hill, swept and cleaned steps to the restrooms and assisted in assembly and installation of the new flagpole.

Refreshments and snacks were provided for all to enjoy. The weather was perfect for working at the cemetery.



Volunteers at the new flagpole & flag



Volunteers joyfully cleaning the steps

BURIED IN HOMEWORK

During his children's sermon in a Lutheran church in Austin, Texas, the pastor was telling about the wonderful teachers he'd had, not only in public schools but also college and seminary. He paused and asked, "Does anyone know what a seminary is?"

Little Ezra, 5, raised his hand and shouted, "Yeah, that's where they put you when you die."



"For the jillionth time, I have looked EVERYWHERE! That winning lottery ticket has GOT to be in his pants!"

***PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE* - A PROUD OCCASION AND A PLEA FOR HELP**

Another milestone in the long history of our beloved cemetery is in the record books and I'm one proud lady to have played a major part in it. And I'm sure it must have been an inspiring experience for all others present.

It was the dedication of our new flag and flagpole held after our lot owners meeting on Memorial Day under the trees in the circle at the top of the hill. It was a hot day but with a cooling breeze as we looked out over the freshly mowed cemetery and saw that beautiful new flag waving at us from down below.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag and the beautiful voices of the Washington Saengerbund singing the Star Spangled Banner were breathtaking.

If you were not at the cemetery on Memorial Day you missed a good annual meeting, dedication service and Memorial Day service, not to mention all the good food. Please plan to come next year. We need your input.

We have put off tiling the roof of the superintendent's house for quite awhile but now we are at a crisis. The main roof, porch roof, wooden eaves and rain gutters on the old stone gatehouse must be replaced NOW before the winter weather sets in (See Page 1). It's a major undertaking and will be very costly. We need your continued wonderful support to help make all of this happen. I know we can do it. We've done it in the past.

I'd like to close by thanking Superintendent Joe Connell for all of his hard work in keeping our cemetery in beautiful condition throughout the year.

Carol Holler, President
Board of Trustees

SEVERAL WAYS YOU CAN HONOR YOUR LOVED ONES AND HELP MAINTAIN THE CEMETERY AND GATEHOUSE

There are several ways during the year you can honor your loved ones buried at Prospect Hill and at the same time help maintain the grounds and the old stone gatehouse.

The first, and most productive over the years, is contributing to the Year-End Holiday Memorial Fundraising Campaign. But contributions will be gladly accepted anytime throughout the year.

Another way is to transfer appreciated stocks and bonds to our Prospect Hill brokerage account. You'll receive a federal tax deduction for the value of the stock(s), and will not have to pay a capital gains tax calculated on the original basis of the stock(s).

Still another way is to include Prospect Hill in your will (called a bequest). We have received several such bequests in the past and would welcome any in the future.

Consult your attorney, accountant or broker for more information on how you can transfer your stocks, bonds or charitable bequest to Prospect Hill.

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* (\$35) \$ _____

_____ *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 _____

Email address: _____

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 sent 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, his duties sometimes 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
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