



2201 North Capitol Street, NE,  
Washington, DC 20002-1103  
[www.prospecthillcemetery.org](http://www.prospecthillcemetery.org)  
Telephone: (202) 667-0676

# Prospect Hill Cemetery

*Our Nation's Capitol's German-American Cemetery*

Holiday Issue

*Newsletter*

2011

## **AFTER LONG, DRAWN-OUT PRELIMINARY PROCEDURE, THE GATEHOUSE ROOF PROJECT IS UNDERWAY**

**By Rudy Becker**



After the article in the last Newsletter describing the deterioration of the roof of the old stone gatehouse, residence of our Superintendent Joe Connell, much progress has been made to upgrade it. In fact, construction started on November 7.

The process had many steps to insure we had the most capable contractor and the best price. First, a Request for Proposals (RFQ) was developed which included a detailed Scope of Work, terms of the bidding process such as pre-bid meetings, form of the bid, details required, etc.

The Scope of Work included removal of the existing clay tiles and underlayment down to bare wood, replacement of any deteriorated sheathing and structural components, installation of new clay tiles, removal of wood soffits and fascia surrounding the main roof and front and rear porches, painting of all new woodwork with a primer and two coats of finish paint, and replacement of the existing rain gutter and down spouts with new materials. We considered lower cost alternatives to replacing the old tiles with new tiles, such as slate or asphalt shingles, but Prospect Hill Cemetery's recognition as an historic landmark by the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Review Board precludes making any changes to the building design.



Next, the RFQ was sent to five prospective contractors which had been prequalified during internet searches based on their reported experience with clay tile roofs, membership in roofing associations, etc., recommendations from users, etc.

Three contractors responded to the RFQ. The proposals were compared with the Scope of Work and with each other, with the objective of gaining an "apples to apples" comparison. While all of the proposals generally reflected the details of the Scope of Work, each had several differences which had to be resolved. Eventually a revised and improved Scope of Work was developed based on input from the three contractors and this was used to request best and final proposals.

*Water Damaged Front Porch  
Ceiling*

The prices of the bids ranged from \$98,000 to \$145,000. Although not the lowest bidder, Wagner Roofing Co. of Hyattsville, MD demonstrated that it was the most capable of the three to fulfill the requirements of the project. But their price exceeded our budget.

Wagner was asked to develop alternative approaches to achieve a lower price. They responded with the concept of removing the old tiles, salvaging those which were in good condition, and substituting other similar used tiles available on a secondary market as needed. Their price for this approach was \$111,920. There was one caveat: the old tiles had to be tested to insure that they met minimum strength and absorptivity standards of the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM). Meeting the strength standard insures that the tile can withstand the weight of snow, ice and foot traffic during roof maintenance. The absorptivity standard insures that the tile will not fail due to the freeze-thaw cycles which occur in cold climates such as in the Washington, DC area.

Samples of the old tiles were sent to a Baltimore testing lab certified by the original tile manufacturer, Ludowici Roof Tile in New Lexington, OH. The results were analyzed by Ludowici, which certified that the old tiles exceeded the ASTM standards and thus could be reinstalled. The supplemental tiles purchased as replacements were also tested and they are expected to pass as well.

Wagner was able to provide references from two similar tile reinstallation projects that they had performed. These were interviewed and both spoke very highly of Wagner's workmanship. One project had been done over twenty years ago and the roof is still performing flawlessly.

A contract was awarded to Wagner Roofing for \$111,920. A pre-construction meeting was held to insure all parties (general contractor, sub-contractors, Prospect Hill staff) understood the project. They discussed the schedule and submittals for new materials and the used tiles, site access, parking and staging areas etc. Work started on November 7 with installation of scaffolding to provide safe access to the roof. Removal of the old tiles and underlayment began on November 11. The project is planned to be completed before Christmas, although bad weather may extend this into 2012.

After the roofing project has been completed, repair of water-damaged ceilings will be undertaken, and the exterior of windows, doors and their frames will be painted.



*Tiles removed from front porch and new underlayment installed*



*Tiles removed from north side gable roof and portion of the main roof; new underlayment installed*

## **YOUR YEAR-END MEMORIAL DONATION WILL HONOR YOUR LOVED ONES AND HELP SUPPORT THE SPECIAL ROOF PROJECT**

Like many of us, the old stone gatehouse residence of our superintendent is showing its age and needs a “builder-upper”.

That “building-upper” has finally been prescribed as a total overhaul of its roof including the clay tiles, eaves, gutters, and all wood and underlayment. The problem was diagnosed several years ago when wet spots were discovered on the second floor bedroom ceiling after a hard rain.

But once again, like many of us, we, the trustees kept putting it off until it became a serious problem that needed immediate attention. The problem has also become a costly financial burden.

With the Holiday Season fast approaching, it’s time to think about our annual Year-End Memorial Fundraising Campaign. In years past we never have stipulated a certain project to which your memorial financial contributions would share.

But this season your trustees decided a portion of your memorial donation will be reserved for what we are calling the Roof Project. (Find out more about the Roof Project in Rudy Becker’s article on page 1.)

In a sense, your personal financial donation will be twofold. It will not only go toward the upkeep and beautification of our cemetery but also help support the Roof Project. It will be a most worthy early holiday gift to your departed loved ones buried at Prospect Hill.

We are almost certain they would agree that sharing your financial gift to them with the Roof Project would be just fine.

So we are appealing to you to donate a little bit more than in the past in honor of your loved ones. Let’s not forget them during this holiday season when memories of happier days gone by keep filling our hearts and minds.

If you wish to honor your departed loved one(s) with a Year-End memorial donation (and we hope you do) please indicate it on the Order Form on page 7. Every little bit will help.

A complete list of contributors and the departed loved ones they are honoring will be printed in the Spring-Summer 2012 Newsletter. (the amount contributed will not be mentioned).

If you do not wish to contribute a memorial donation please help us with an End of Year financial support donation, also indicated on the Order Form.

Thanks to all for your continued support of Prospect Hill Cemetery.

## **EARTHQUAKE AND HURRICANE TOPPLED TREES AND TOMBSTONES BUT THE OLD STONE GATEHOUSE SURVIVED IT ALL**

When Mother Nature unleashed her destructive forces back in August our cemetery was right in her path. First came the surprise earthquake. As you recall, the tremors shook the entire area. It was scary. Five tombstones tumbled over in our cemetery but fortunately it didn’t damage the old stone gatehouse residence of our superintendent Joe Connell.



Two of the tombstones were toppled near the circle where the old chapel once stood. Two smaller ones fell over at the top of the cemetery bordering Lincoln Road. Superintendent Connell was able to upright the latter two himself. The fifth casualty was in Section E behind the gatehouse.

A few days later came hurricane Irene. The public had been warned days ahead of the impact it might have and the destruction that might occur. Once again Prospect Hill took its toll – three big trees and many branches throughout the cemetery blew down.

Connell remarked he couldn't sleep all that night listening to the whirling wind and the pounding rain and wondering what the cemetery grounds would look like when it was all over. At 4:30 a.m., he heard a sudden crash. One of the larger trees in Section D behind the new flagpole had plunged to earth. Two other big trees in that section were also toppled, but once again the old gatehouse survived it all (except for its leaky roof).

Before the hurricane hit, Connell had contacted the reliable R & R Tree Service of Silver Spring requesting our cemetery be first on their schedule for service after the storm which was on a Saturday. R & R was there Sunday afternoon. A return trip Monday had everything cleaned up by mid-day. A few days later R & R returned again to grind the stumps. A job well done!



Large poplar tree completely uprooted in Section D along center roadway



Tree crabapple tree split right down the middle in Section D



Large Bradford Pear branch blocks roadway between Sections M & I.

## **CEMETERY GATES WILL BE ON REGULAR SCHEDULE DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON**

With Christmas and New Year's Day falling on Sundays this year, there will be no change in the opening and closing of the cemetery gates during the holidays. The gates will be open Thursday through Monday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and closed on Tuesday and Wednesday, which means they will also be open Thanksgiving Day.

### **WE APPOLIGIZE FOR THE GENERAL APPEARANCE OF OUR RECENT SUMMER-FALL NEWSLETTER**

The familiar phrase, "garbage in, garbage out" has been uttered by even the most capable computer users when documents produced using computers and the internet didn't turn out as expected. The Prospect Hill Cemetery Newsletter production department is not an exception.

You may have noticed that the formatting of headlines and positioning of photos in the last Newsletter (Summer-Fall) was not up to our high standards. Headlines were split between pages and captions under photos were misplaced.

Although we are not exactly sure how it happened, the file containing the Newsletter that was sent via email to the printer, was apparently modified (corrupted in computer-speak) during transit so that when it arrived at the printer, the formatting had changed. The printer prints what he receives and is not responsible for proofreading the document before printing. Our experience with this particular printer has been exemplary over the last several years, so we didn't proofread the document prior to final printing either.

Needless to say, our editor, Henry Fankhauser, was chagrined to say the least. An experienced newspaperman, he says this would never have happened in the old days before computers.

We, the newsletter production department offer our sincerest apology to you, our readers, and to Henry, our editor, and will do our best in the future to insure that Prospect Hill Cemetery's newsletters attain the highest level quality.

### **WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT OUR CEMETERY'S HISTORY?**

You may be surprised at some names for family acquaintances of long ago whom you didn't know personally but are familiar with and didn't realize are buried in Prospect Hill Cemetery.

*Prospect Hill Cemetery Adult Burial List*, the latest book compiled by Carol Holler and Jean Crabill may rouse your curiosity and make you want to know more. Nearly 300 pages, the book lists all burials of persons 14 years of age or older through year 2002, giving (to the extent of our research and knowledge) the age at time of death, birthplace and date, death place and date, burial date, and other information from tombstones, cemetery records, and various other sources of information about the District of Columbia. It has been a "best seller," having already been reprinted once, and is available for \$35 (plus \$5 postage).

*Prospect Hill Cemetery Children's Burial List*, a companion to the Adult Burial List, records all burials of persons younger than 14 years of age, and is available for \$20 plus \$5.

And if you'd like to read many interesting mini-biographies of persons interred in Prospect Hill, another book, *The Families of Prospect Hill*, is also available. Written in collaboration with about 160 lot owners and

descendants, the book contains 496 pages with many photographs, and is priced at \$20 plus \$5.

Perhaps the most historic of Crabill's books about our cemetery is her first one, *The Immigrants and Their Cemetery: The Story of Prospect Hill*. This book contains the original history written around 1949 by Catholic University German Professor Dr. Paul Gleis (who worked from the original cemetery Board minutes, written in German until ca. 1920), then from 1950 to the present time, and tells about the early German-American immigrant history in Washington, DC. It contains 194 pages and costs \$30 plus \$5.

All books may be purchased by using the Order Form herein.

## **SÄNGERBUND'S CHRISTMAS CONCERT TO BE HELD DECEMBER 18**

This year the Sängerbund's traditional German Christmas Concert will be given at the United Church (Die Vereinigte Kirche), 20th and G Streets, NW, in Washington, DC. The concert will begin at 3:00 p.m., Sunday, December 18, 2011. An offering will be taken to help those in need.

Following the concert by the German choral group, refreshments will be served in the church social hall downstairs. The Saengerbund has performed at many special events at Prospect Hill.

For more information about the Washington Saengerbund, visit their website: [www.saengerbund.org](http://www.saengerbund.org).

## **ALL OF US EXTEND TO ALL OF YOU OUR GOOD WISHES AND THANKS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON**

On behalf of your Board of Trustees and Superintendent Connell we extend our heartfelt gratitude to all lot owners, donors, volunteers and friends for your loyal support, generosity and financial assistance during 2011. You are the primary reason Prospect Hill remains the beautiful cemetery it is today.

Cherished memories of loved ones interred in Prospect Hill will be in our hearts and on our minds more than ever this Holiday Season.

Despite the uncertain situations all over the world today, your Board of Trustees: Carol Holler, Rudy Becker, Henry Fankhauser, Edith Gill, Gerhard Meinzer, Maryanne Probus and Albert Reitz, plus Superintendent Joe Connell wish all of you a prayerful Thanksgiving, a Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year.

### **At your service**

One Sunday morning, the pastor noticed little Johnny staring at a large plaque mounted in the church foyer. After a while, the pastor walked over to the boy.

"Johnny, do you know why all those names are on the plaque," asked the pastor.

"No, sir, I don't," Johnny replied.

"These are all the people who have died in the service," said the pastor.

Soberly they stood together staring at the plaque. After a few minutes, Johnny's voice broke the thoughtful silence.

"Which one, sir – the 8:30 or the 10:30?"

*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

Please fill out the form below completely so we can accurately account for your donation and purchases in the cemetery's financial records. Separate checks for donations and purchases are NOT required.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

1. I wish to give a Year-End Memorial donation in memory of or in honor of:

\_\_\_\_\_ Amount of Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

2. I wish to make an end-of-year financial support donation of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

3. I would like to order the following books:

\_\_\_\_\_ copies, The Immigrants and Their Cemetery: The Story of Prospect Hill (\$30) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ copies, Families of Prospect Hill (\$20) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ copies, Prospect Hill Cemetery Adult Burial List (\$35) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ copies, Prospect Hill Cemetery Children's Burial List (\$20) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of books \_\_\_\_\_ times \$5 each for postage \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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**Total amount of donation and book order** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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

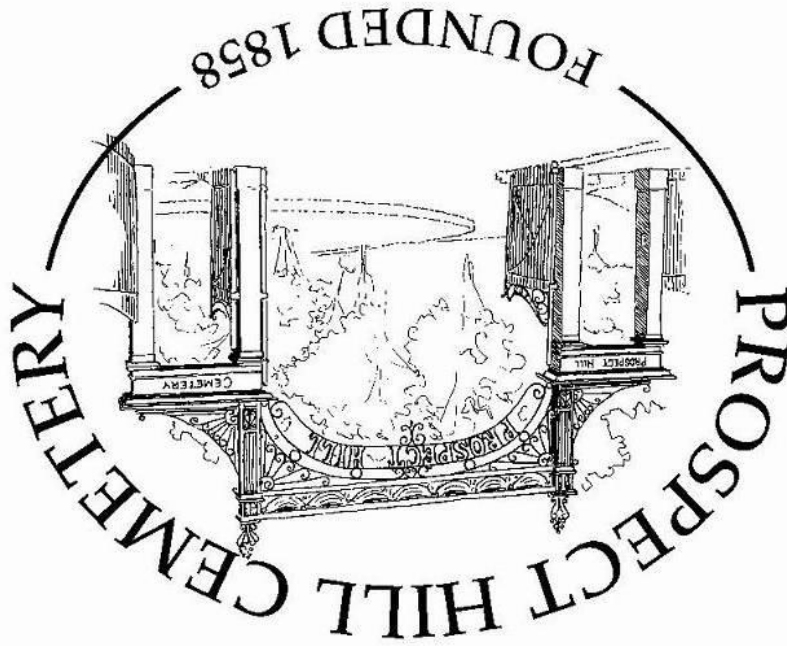
All correspondence should be made to the address above. Thank you for your support of Prospect Hill.

### 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, 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](http://www.prospecthillcemetery.org)



**PROSPECT HILL CEMETERY**

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