

# Heritage Gazette

ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC CONGRESSIONAL CEMETERY • FALL 2007

## Bicentennial Day of Remembrance

BY JAN GAUDIO

Bicentennials don't come around often. In fact they only come around once, so Historic Congressional Cemetery is continuing its bicentennial year celebration with a *Day of Remembrance* on September 16, 2007. It promises to be an afternoon filled with "old-fashioned Memorial Day" activities.

The gates open at 11:00AM, Sunday, and the ceremonies officially begin with an Hour of Honor from 1:00 to 2:00. During this time families and affinity groups will place flowers, flags, pebbles, balloons or other mementoes at the graves of their loved ones, colleagues, or others they honor. Guides will be available to assist in locating burial sites.

At 2:00PM the Remembrance Service opens with remarks by Rev. Daniel P. Coughlin, Chaplain, U.S. House of Representatives, followed by a formal military wreath-laying and honor guard dedicated to all those buried at Congressional Cemetery. After the service, the United States Navy Band will perform a patriotic concert to continue the theme of service to country that those who rest at Congressional Cemetery exemplify. The Remembrance Service and Concert are free and the public is most welcome. Bring lawn chairs, blankets and a picnic to enjoy while listening to the concert.

Following the concert, at approximately 3:30pm, the Association for the Preservation of Historic Congressional Cemetery (APHCC) will offer guided tours led by the Dozen Decent Docents, highlighting local and national historic

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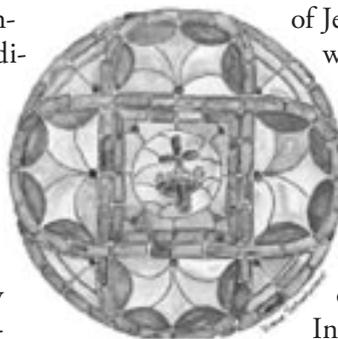
## Noting the Chapel Windows

BY PATRICK CROWLEY

This spring the Board commissioned local artist Diane Schratweiser to create original watercolor paintings of the chapel rose windows in celebration of our bicentennial. The six-foot diameter stain glass mosaics bless the east and west walls in beautiful blue and yellow hues. The east window holds the crown of Jesus in blue; the west window holds the letters IHS in a warm yellow. (In the Middle Ages the name of Jesus was written IHESUS; the monogram is a contraction of this.<sup>1</sup>)

Inspired by the gothic cathedrals of Europe, the windows are at once grand yet humbly becoming of our small meditative chapel. Diane's lovingly hand-made notecards capture the vibrant

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*Letter from the Board...*

## Changes on the HCC Board

Linda Harper, our Association chairperson, shifted gears to serve a wider audience this summer as she took up the reins at Cultural Tourism DC as their new executive director in July. Harper joined the board in 2001 as chair and set about rebuilding the Association into a more effective organization. During her tenure as chair the Association annual budget rose from \$100,000 to \$550,000 while the endowment fund rose from almost \$400,000 to \$1,000,000. Linda expanded our circle of friends by developing strong relationships with groups like the professional lawn care association and the Washington Navy Yard. She also brought in several substantial grants to help rebuild the cemetery grounds and outreach programs. Harper will step down as chair at the end of the year, but will remain on the board as her duties at Cul-

tural Tourism DC grow.

Other board changes: the board welcomed two new board members this summer—Ted Bechtel, representative from the Architect of the Capitol's office, and Clyde Henderson, member at large. Bechtel comes with a strong background in grounds management as man-in-charge of the Capitol grounds, a 400-acre campus. Ted hit the ground running by coordinating the July visit by the professional lawn care association with over 60 professionals from eight different companies. Henderson comes by way of Arkansas but has numerous family connections among those interred at Congressional. Clyde chose the daunting first task of raising \$100,000 in his first year on the board to meet a matching grant for grounds improvement.

—Patrick Crowley

## Harmonic Convergence

BY STEVE HAMMOND AND JOYCE PALMER

On May 4, docent Steve Hammond was all set to lead a quick 4:00PM tour for the Civil War Round Table of Chicago, while docent Joyce Palmer was prepared to welcome the Big Red Band of Koscuisko (MS) High School at 6:00. But the band arrived early, handing Hammond, Palmer and Patrick Crowley over 165 visitors at once.

The Round Table was on a four-day excursion following the trail of John Wilkes Booth led by historian Ed Bearss. The two-bus group was stopping to see the most famous unmarked grave in Washington, that of Lincoln assassination co-conspirator Davy Herold. The Koscuisko band brought 50-plus band

members, with leaders, parents and chaperones, for a short concert at the grave of John Philip Sousa.

Joyce rallied the musicians and led them to the Sousa grave site just as the Chicago buses pulled up to the main gate. Steve gathered the Chicago folks at the gatehouse, and with Bearss at his side, gave them a quick rundown on the Civil War sites—the Herold grave, the Brady grave, the Arsenal Explosion monument. When he asked for questions, the first was “Where is Sousa’s grave?” At that instant, the Big Red Band broke into a rousing version of “Stars and Stripes Forever!” “Just follow the music,” was all Steve had to say.

*continued on 3*



1807 2007

ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC CONGRESSIONAL CEMETERY  
Community • Leadership • Discovery

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HERITAGE GAZETTE: Fall 2007  
DESIGN: Gene Kim Graphics

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www.congressionalcemetery.org  
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## Waunakee Community Band

The 90-piece Waunakee Community Band braved 100 degree heat to show their appreciation for John Philip Sousa on August 7th with a brief set of rousing marches under a brutal sun. Also on hand was a film



crew from local PBS station, WETA, shooting a short documentary on Congressional Cemetery.

Founded and directed by Janet Tweed, the band hails from Waunakee, New York, where it was established in 1985. It's an all-volunteer “summer band” that, despite its down-to-earth *esprit de corps*, is a serious band with a worldwide travel record to prove it. Its members range in age from 13 to 85; its musical style covers a wide range as well. ♪

## Renewal & Remembrance Volunteer Day

BY PATRICK CROWLEY

The professional lawn care association, PLANET Network, returned to Congressional for the fifth year in a row to do an annual day of volunteer service work. This year's Renewal & Remembrance Day on July 16th brought over 40 lawn care profes-

sionals from across the nation to provide such services as weed control, plantings, mulching, tree pruning. In addition, PLANET Network delivered 12 pallets of mulch, eight trees, and 12 shrubs, which will benefit Congressional for years to come. Professional lawn care firms such as Lawn Doctor and Bay Country Lawns joined tree care specialists Davey Tree, Bartlett Tree, RTEC, and Antietam Tree & Landscape to brave the 90 plus heat throughout the day. PBI Gordon and NuFarm donated all the weed control and lawn enhancement products applied during the event.

### Harmonic Convergence, continued from page 2

At the Sousa grave, the band continued with several more Sousa marches, some so moving that one of Chicagoans actually broke out in tears. The time passed quickly and the Civil War tour had to leave, but the group leader praised the hospitality offered them and Steve was honored when Bearss asked, “Any time I bring a tour here, will you be sure to be here to help me?” High praise from a legendary man. ♪

With so many firms and individuals on site, it was the biggest year ever. While some arborists limbed up or pruned several trees to lighten the viewsheds of the yard, others planted eight new trees west of the chapel

to replace the cherry trees planted by the DAR 25 years ago. Lawn care specialists treated the yard with broadleaf weed suppressant.

“We truly appreciate everyone taking the time out to volunteer their products, services, employees and equipment to give back to those who paid the ultimate sacrifice,” said Mike Caprio, senior equipment manager for Lawn Doctor, Inc. and project champion for the day. “It's a great feeling for this group to work together,” said Tom Delaney, director of government affairs for PLANET. “This is our way of giving back, and each year, we're continuing to grow.” The Association certainly echoes its appreciation for all the hard work and commitment to return year after year. It was an intense five-hour infusion of TLC for Congressional. Thanks guys! ♪

## Notable Chapel Windows, *continued from page 1*

colors and intricate glass shapes in the warm, soft texture of watercolor.

Long covered in opaque plastic protective covers, the rose windows were only recently uncovered, revealing serious damage to the curved sills. Examination of the other 23 stained glass windows found similar problems that need immediate attention.

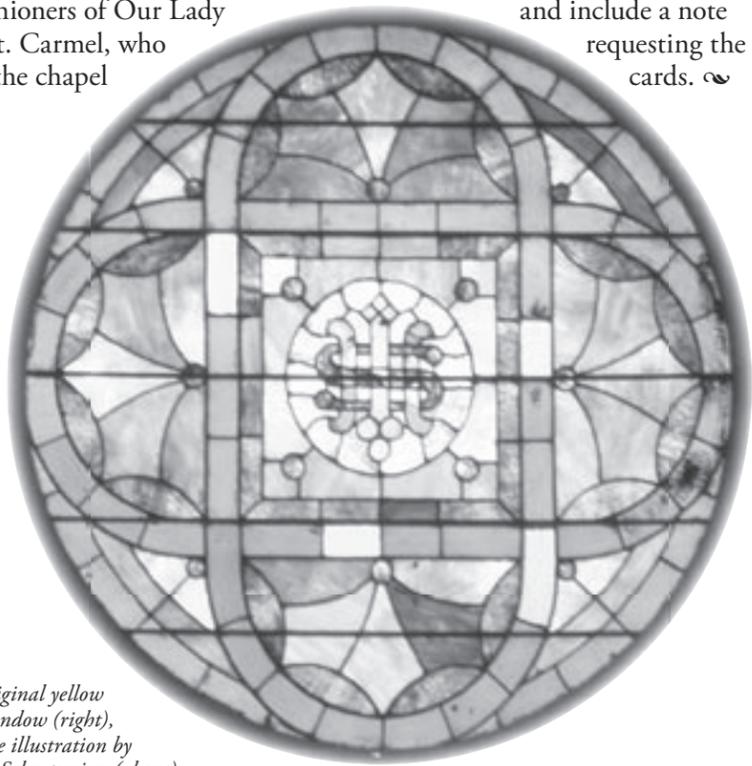
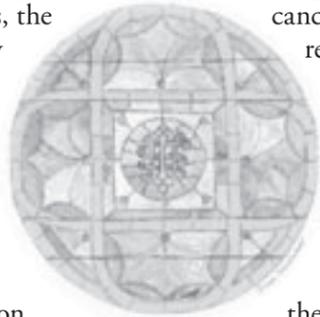
As part of our chapel restoration project, the rotted sashes and sills will be repaired, new plexiglass protective covers will be installed, and all 24 windows scraped, primed, and painted. The cost: \$13,000.

Last year the Board decided that chapel restoration work could not wait any longer and committed to restoring the structure. Happily, we are well on the way. Last year the parishioners of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, who rent the chapel

for Sunday services, orchestrated the \$16,000 repair of the electric line to the chapel. This year the Board cancelled virtually all other

restoration projects to direct \$70,000 toward the restoration of the old Buckingham slate roof (see the spring issue of the *Heritage Gazette*).

Now it's time for the windows. Here is where you can participate in the Chapel Restoration Program. The Association is offering Diane's handmade notecards that capture the beautiful stained glass mosaics to those who donate \$100 toward the restoration effort. Each packet contains four notecards—two of the east window, two of the west window. We have only 50 packets left, so be sure to respond early and include a note requesting the cards. ♡



The original yellow rose window (right), and the illustration by Diane Schratweiser (above).

## Remembrance Day, *continued from page 1*

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“characters.” After you’ve taken the introductory tour, pick up one of ten new self-guided tours and explore the grounds on your own. The self-guided tours cover some exciting eras in American history such as the War of 1812, the Burning of Washington in 1814, and the Civil War. They also cover fascinating group-

ings of the men and women who made their mark in American history: Men of Adventure—explorers, surveyors and Indian agents; builders of the Federal City, featuring men and women who helped build Washington, DC; Educators, Agitators & Lawyers—prominent and not-so-prominent Washington women; American Indians; and much more.

September 16th will be a day that offers you a new and unique perspective of Congressional Cemetery, a truly unusual event that brings together American Indians, the Masonic Lodges, Daughters and Sons of the American Revolution, the Fraternal Order of Police; alumni of Annapolis and West Point; the United States Navy Band; family members; and all those who love the history of the nation’s capital city. Each will honor in their traditional ways the spirit of loved ones, founding fathers and mothers, and the many who made this nation and the young federal city what it is today. All who participate will learn and share their histories, traditions and cultures.



APHCC looks forward to sharing this special *Day of Remembrance* with you, your family and your organization. We are excited about launching the cemetery into a third century of service to the community while preserving, interpreting the history and honoring those who rest within these hallowed grounds.

Congressional Cemetery has come a long way in the last ten years thanks to many Capitol Hill neighbors. The Association wants to remind all of us about the wonderful history that the cemetery holds and offer everyone a special *Day of Remembrance*. ♡

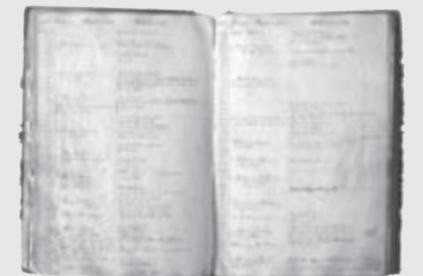


# CONGRESSIONAL CEMETERY

BICENTENNIAL

1807  2007

## Day of Remembrance



September 16, 2007

## Program

- 11:00AM Gates Open
- 1:00PM–2:00 Hour of Honor
- 2:00 Remembrance Service (Chapel southside)
- 2:30–3:30 United States Navy Band Concert on the Green
- 3:30 Docent-guided Tours of Cemetery
- 5:30 Gates Close

<sup>1</sup> *New Advent Catholic Encyclopedia*, August 28, 2007. <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07421a.htm>

## In the Name of Science

BY CAPTAIN SKIP THEBERGE, NOAA CORPS (RET.), NOAA CENTRAL LIBRARY

On September 8, 1846, a hurricane off the Virginia Capes swept the captain and 10 crewmen of the Brig Washington overboard. This tragic event is remembered with a tall marble obelisk in the shape of a broken ship mast at Range 32/Site 193. The brig (a brigantine rigged vessel) belonged to the U.S. Coast Survey and was conducting explorations along the eastern seaboard to map the coast and prevailing weather patterns to ensure the safety of future travelers. These brave men thus became some of the first to die in the name of modern science.

The Coast Survey was the first great science agency in the Federal Government and a major foundation of our modern physical science infrastructure. Its initial research efforts included embryonic studies of tides and tidal currents, the collection of bottom samples to determine sea-floor characteristics for the anchoring



of vessels, and soundings to establish the depth and physical features of near-shore waters. The ultimate product was the nautical chart. Among the sciences that evolved in the Coast Survey, geodesy was pre-eminent. Geodesy is the science of precise measurement of the Earth and the determination of its shape. Without geodesy, the wonderful technology of GPS could not have developed. (Nor the hobby of geocaching, which can be practiced at Congressional following a trail of explorers and adventurers interred here.)

In late 1843, Alexander Dallas Bache (Range 32/Site 194), took over as the second superintendent of the Survey. Bache, also a founder and first President of the National Academy of Sciences, proved to be a thoroughly modern science administrator, a great leader,



and a man with virtually unlimited vision. Under Bache, the Coast Survey became an instrument of the Union forces during the Civil War as geodetic surveyors, topographers, and hydrographers accompanied Union Armies and naval squadrons throughout the war. Alexander Dallas Bache was among the greatest of United States scientists and science administrators.

President Thomas Jefferson founded the U.S. Coast Survey in 1807, which makes this the Coast Survey bicentennial year as well. The National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration is the successor agency to the Coast Survey and is celebrating its bicentennial year (1807-2007). See: <http://celebrating200years.noaa.gov/> and <http://www.history.noaa.gov/>.

## Alexander Macomb: Art Reflects Life

BY JEFF MEADE

As a member of the Historic Congressional Cemetery's *Dozen Decent Docents*, I study and discuss the collection of grave monuments within the Cemetery's grounds. My tours focus on the iconography of burial stones, a carved language of visual symbols and meaning. Of course, many of the burial stones placed over tombs describe the symbols of the living - meaningful ways to commemorate departed loved ones or important people. One such monument, and the one I use to conclude my tours, is the burial stone of Major General Alexander Macomb (Range 55/Site 147).

Macomb's iconography begins at the base, where I notice two large bronze plaques. Each plaque boasts of the General's impeccable reputation and military career. History leaves such assertions puzzling, since Macomb's reign as the second Major General of the Army created quite a controversy. Macomb succeeded Jacob Brown

(Range 57/Site 151) as Major General, and immediately began expanding the role of the army's commanding officer. Macomb used the



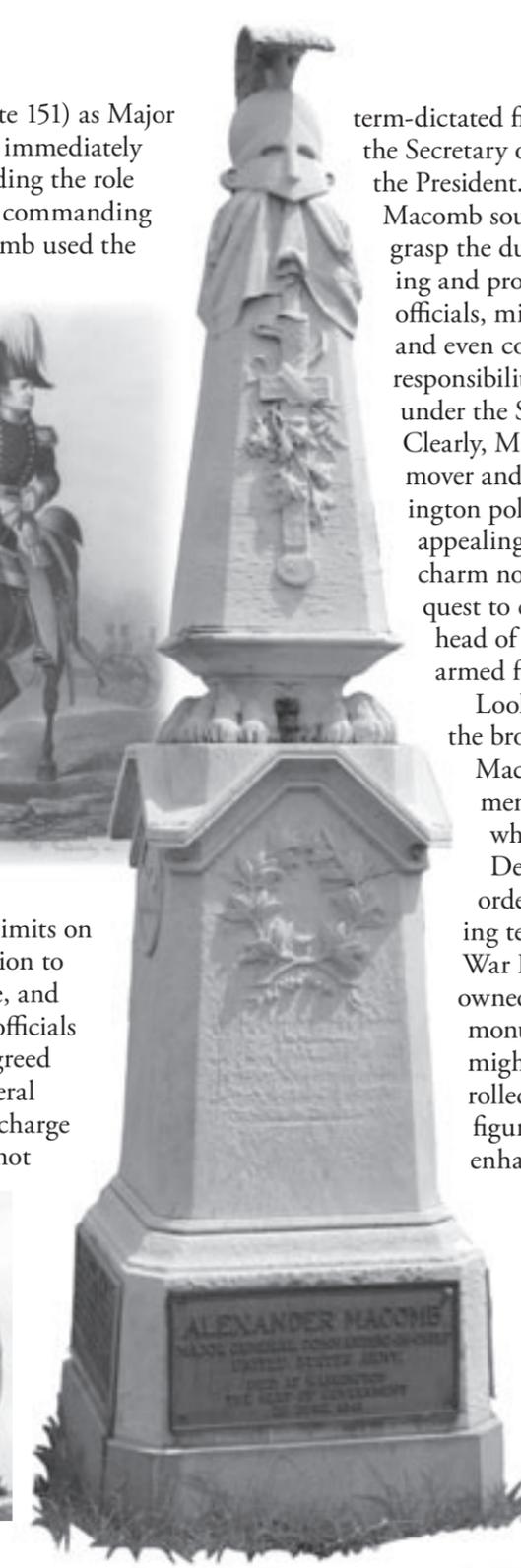
lack of term limits on his new position to his advantage, and government officials reluctantly agreed that the General should be in charge of the army, not

term-dictated figures such as the Secretary of War or even the President. Forging ahead, Macomb sought to firmly grasp the duties of appointing and promoting military officials, military finance, and even court martial, all responsibilities previously under the Secretary of War. Clearly, Macomb was a mover and shaker of Washington politics, and his appealing charisma and charm no doubt aided his quest to create a dignified head of the American armed forces.

Looking again at the bronze plaques on Macomb's monument, I understand why the War

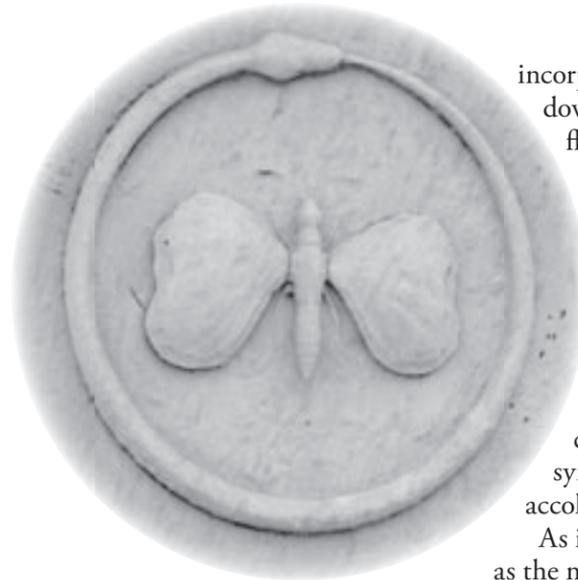
Department would order such glowing testimony. (The War Department owned the Macomb monument.) Macomb might have steamrolled a few political figures in order to enhance confidence

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*The author studies Macomb's monument.*

**Macomb: Art Reflects Life,** *continued from page 8*



incorporates a bird, possibly a dove, holding up the crest that flows down the back of the stone. I never noticed the carved American flag draped underneath the helmet until I climbed up some scaffolding the National Park Service Historic Preservation Training Center erected during cleaning. The collection of strong military symbols seems to confirm the accolades on the bronze plaques.

As intricate as the military iconography is, Macomb's monument also includes several excellent examples of symbols dedicated to human mortality and Christian faith. On the North side of the monument is a large circle, which turns out

in his position, but military officials clearly appreciated his efforts. Glancing upwards on the worn marble, I notice a large laurel wreath atop the original, faded inscription. As a symbol of achievement, distinction and success, the carved laurel wreath visually confirms the writing on the plaques. A large sword, complete with an eagle's head hilt, adorns the center section of the stone. The eagle head adds a symbol of courage to the sword, a clear reference to military service. What I find most interesting is that the sword seems tied into the scabbard with a sash, possibly indicating that this military accoutrement was purely symbolic. A large oak branch drapes over the sword's scabbard as well, a symbol of power and authority often found on military tombs. At the top of the monument, and perhaps the stone's most eye-catching feature, rests a large, Spartan helmet. The intricately carved helmet



to be a snake eating its tail. This is a common symbol found in the Cemetery, indicating time without end and the Christian belief in resurrection. A large butterfly rests within the circle, reinforcing the resurrection message. On the South side of the stone is an hourglass with wings, indicating the passage of time or, literally, "time flies." This image rises above a sickle crossed over a single blade of wheat, signifying the resurrection over death's harvest. There is only one symbol carved into the



back of the monument: a large, simple cross.

Alexander Macomb's monument contains such a complex variety of symbols that I find it hard not to use this stone as a finale for my Cemetery tours. The sheer variety of images, together in one place, makes the Macomb monument unique. Now that I've studied Macomb himself, I understand why the carved symbols appear on his grave marker. And I can't help but think that the eyes in the helmet watch me as I walk by. ☺



## Dutchman Repairs

BY PATRICK CROWLEY

Stone. It's been around a long time. Although we tend to think of stone as eternal (hence its use as gravestones), it does erode—check out the Grand Canyon. Oddly, it is the softest of God's creations that breaks down the hardest: water and sunlight. It may take a while but all things circulate. As caretakers of a graveyard and its gravestones, we see and deal with the phenomenon of erosion all the time. Hot and cold; expansion and contraction. Polished surfaces erode and tiny veins in the stone become cracks.

Fortunately, stone markers can be repaired if you have some skilled craftsmen around, as we do with the National Park Service Historic Preservation Training Center team. Our 165 Latrobe Monuments, often called cenotaphs, are made of a sedimentary rock formed of tiny grains of sand laid down in beds or layers, called sandstone. The sandstone quarried by the builders of Wash-

ington's grand edifices came from Aquia Creek, which if it had been left to harden a few more million years would have made a fine stone to build with. As is, however, it is a soft stone prone to erosion, cracking, and delamination.

One method of repairing stone memorials is to remove the offending blemish and insert a new piece of stone, called a 'Dutchman.' Obviously, removing the original material is irreversible, so the decision to make a Dutchman repair should not be made lightly. And if you value the objects, a professional mason should be called upon to do the work.

Finding a suitable matching stone is the first problem—every piece of stone is unique. Fortunately for us, sandstone salvaged from the U.S. Capitol has been made available for repairs and replacements of our Latrobe Monuments. As seen in the accompanying photographs, the flawed section of the original stone



is removed and the edges of the cut-out are honed smooth. Straight line seams between old and new stone may give way under pressure in the future, so the cut-out and inserts are carved into other-than-right angled shapes to protect the seam.

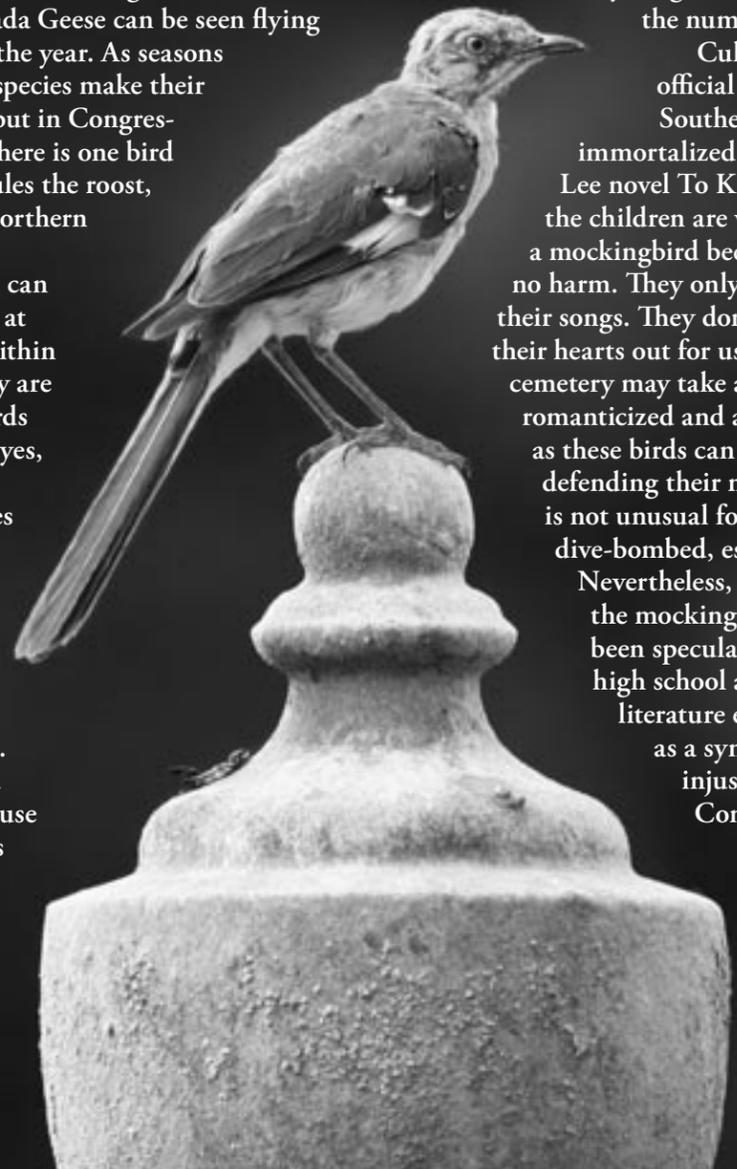
The replacement pieces are cut over-sized and then carefully carved and shaved to fit the cut-out. An extremely tight fit is required to forestall the encroachment of water into the seam, which could quickly destroy the repairs. When complete, the Dutchman is easily visible to the eye but undetectable to the touch. With repairs, we can help the monument last for a long time. ☺

## Congressional Cemetery: To View a Mockingbird

BY PETER VANKEVICH

Walking in Congressional Cemetery at any time of the year will provide plenty of bird observations. The common urban birds, European Sparrows, House Sparrows and Rock Pigeons are all present. Against this bland ornithological background, bird-life gets interesting. Mourning Doves can be seen flying rapidly from tree to tree, or resting on the new chapel roof. Being located along the Anacostia river, Ring-billed and Herring Gulls, Great-Blue Herons, and Canada Geese can be seen flying overhead most of the year. As seasons change, different species make their presence known, but in Congressional Cemetery there is one bird that year round rules the roost, so to speak: the Northern Mockingbird.

Mockingbirds can be seen and heard at almost anytime within the cemetery. They are long, slim grey birds with pale yellow eyes, and very visible white wing patches that can be seen in flight. As their name implies, they are able to mimic songs of other birds and even other sounds. You can identify a mockingbird because it typically repeats one song usually



four to six times and then it will change to another series. Favoring cultivated lands that include trees and shrubs, the cemetery is an ideal habitat and they can often be seen perched on a colonial tablet or one of the Victorian-era monuments.

Out of curiosity, I decided to count the number of mockingbirds seen in the cemetery. Since this was on July 28th, both newly fledged young and adults were about, and the number was an amazing 41.

Culturally, they are the official state bird of five Southern states and are immortalized in the title of the Harper Lee novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* where the children are warned, "It's a sin to kill a mockingbird because mockingbirds do no harm. They only provide pleasure with their songs. They don't do one thing but sing their hearts out for us." Some walking in the cemetery may take a bit of exception to this romanticized and anthropomorphic image as these birds can be rather aggressive by defending their nesting territory, and it is not unusual for a person or pet to be dive-bombed, especially in late summer. Nevertheless, the significance of the mockingbird in this novel has been speculated upon in countless high school and College American literature essays. Whether seen as a symbol of innocence, injustice, or the Old South, Congressional Cemetery has a wonderful bird-in-residence. ∞



## Chapel Landscaping Complements Restoration Work

BY MICHELE PAGAN

Visitors to the Cemetery may have noticed that the landscaping around the Chapel improved considerably in July after volunteers from Planet Network, organized and recruited by Association Chair Linda Harper, planted new evergreen shrubs, trees, and mulching the area around the chapel to give the chapel year round color. With that in mind, shrubs were ordered according to their sunlight requirements. The north side of the chapel was already well under control, thanks to a large and mature stand of azaleas, which bloom pink every Spring.

The morning sunlight now shines on a row of winter blooming camellias and a lilac. These should provide nice color when it blossoms in the spring. The conventional wisdom is that lilacs don't do very well this far South, so we are hoping that with a minimal sun exposure, it may survive on the east wall.

Along the south wall there are now two very early Spring blooming azaleas, which should do well in the full sun and bring a nice purple to

this area at a time when very little else is blooming.

The west front, which receives direct sunlight during the afternoon hours, now has another pair of early Spring blooming camellias and a matched pair of Red Heart hibiscus'. One very mature hibiscus is already in place at the left corner, and now it has a mate, at the right chapel corner. The mature specimen will be slowly pruned back in size, so that in a few short years, these two plants will match in size.

In addition to the many irises that have been donated over the years, summer-blooming daylilies, and last year's planting of many Spring-blossoming bulbs, there is now a continuous ring of Liriope, which Emily Crandall installed. The chapel will now have a chance to

provide almost year round color.

Offers of plant material are welcomed, but more than donations, we need your time. Donated plant material can't install itself so volunteer gardeners are much appreciated.

Thanks for visiting and helping us monitor our gardens at the Cemetery. The Garden Corps is always interested in meeting new folks who enjoy experiencing the Cemetery "from the ground up!" ∞





## Guided Tours

**Regularly scheduled guided tours** are available every Saturday at 11:00AM, starting at the Gatehouse.

**Monthly Civil War tours** are available—call the Gatehouse for specifics



## Calendar

- September 8—Patriots Project Volunteer Day
- September 16—Bicentennial “Day of Remembrance”
- September 17—19 National Preservation Institute Cemetery Preservation National Workshop
- October 14—Garden Corps Volunteer Day
- November 3—Patriots Project Volunteer Day
- November 6—Association Honors (approx. 10:00AM, check with Gatehouse):  
John Philip Sousa “Friend of Congressional” Award  
Benjamin B. French Service Award
- November 6—Marine Corps Band Tribute to John Phillip Sousa (approx. 10:30AM, check with Gatehouse)
- November 18—Garden Corps Volunteer Day

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Congressional Cemetery

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