

# HERITAGE GAZETTE

WINTER 2017

ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF  
HISTORIC CONGRESSIONAL CEMETERY

## MAJOR PRESERVATION PROJECTS

BY PAUL K. WILLIAMS

**W**e know that donors to historic cemeteries and other nonprofits sometimes wonder where their contributions go, and we are pleased to report on the completion of three major historic preservation projects here in the cemetery, along with a few other preservation activities. This year alone, HCC dedicated a record \$200,000 toward these three restoration undertakings.

### FRONT GATE

You have read much here about the fundraising effort to restore our original front gate and it is our pleasure to report that the gate is back in place! It was quite

an engineering feat, and has made us ponder just how they did that when it was first installed in 1856. Flaherty Iron Works in Alexandria, Virginia expanded the original gate to accommodate today's larger trucks and matched perfectly the very (did we say very?) heavy wrought iron posts and spindles to create two pedestrian gates on either side. It was \$65,000 well spent.

Those six-foot high spindles might look like your typical fence, but they are solid iron measuring two inches on each side. It was also a lesson in patience – who knew a gate needed a sign permit? – as we encountered long waits for city permits, inspectors, elevation studies, temporary fencing that disliked even a soft breeze, a very complex foundation and underground utilities to contend with. We are thrilled with the results, well enough to forget any of the hurdles.

The company ingeniously incorporated our 'Congressional Cemetery' arch that was installed at the Gatehouse in 1923, raising it four feet to accommodate any size truck we might need onsite. So, after ten years, our logo is back in place where it belongs! One hundred per-

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## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

In November, the board of the Association for the Preservation of Historic Congressional Cemetery, the nonprofit organization that oversees Historic Congressional Cemetery (HCC), spent a half day at a retreat. It was a time for us both to reflect on the progress that HCC has made over the last year, and look to future challenges and opportunities. And what a year it has been.

The fiscal stability of HCC is always front and center for the board, and we have made progress on several fronts this year. Site sales continue to climb as the word spreads that we are an active cemetery. We are well on the way toward matching our endowment. Several years ago, Congress appropriated \$2 million dollars, which we would only receive if HCC matched it with \$2 million in donations. As of the end of this year, we have matched just over \$1.5 million. Our objective is to get the full endowment matched by 2022, and thanks to the generosity of hundreds of individuals who care deeply for HCC, we are confident we will reach that goal.

The amazing HCC staff, supported by many volunteers, put together a remarkably successful series of events that both strengthened the HCC community and raised funds. Soul Strolls was sold out for the third year in a row—1,400 people, many of whom were at the cemetery for the first time, attended over two weekends in October. Hundreds of runners joined us for the Dead Man's Run and the Pride 5K. There is growing attendance at Notes from the Crypt, our concert series led by Eric DeWaardt, dog walker and National Symphony Orchestra violist extraordinaire. The Day of the Dog, held on a beautiful Sunday in May, brought over 1,600 people to HCC. And many other events, from the Tombs and Tomes book club, to the Honey Harvest and Photos with Santa, provide unique ways for hundreds of people to engage with their friends and neighbors at HCC.

Preserving the Cemetery as a historic site is a key focus for both board and staff, and we have made great progress there as well. Our newly restored front gate is finished, and we will celebrate it with an official dedication next spring. We rebuilt a large segment of the original brick wall, repaired the Havenner Vault, and restored 250 headstones.

Our dogwalking program, the K9 Corps, continues to thrive and provides a vibrant and engaged community that is a daily presence at HCC. Many thanks to the K9 Committee, led by HCC board member Steve Brennwald, for providing wise stewardship of this unique community resource.

None of this would be possible without the HCC staff and board. It is a privilege for me to serve as the board chair, and I want to offer my thanks to those members who rotated off the board this year for their countless hours of dedicated service to HCC. Ed Miller, Kelly Crowe, Sharon Bosworth, Beverly Ward and Ted Bechtol, we will miss you on the board but look forward to seeing you at HCC in other venues!

The end of the year, and the holiday season, is a time to celebrate family and friends and to contribute to those institutions that make a real difference. Without your support, the progress we have made would not have been possible. I hope you will be as generous with your giving this year as you have been in the past as we continue to build on our success and make HCC a truly unique community resource that both serves the living and honors the dead for generations to come.

Happy holidays.



—Susan Urahn



THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF  
HISTORIC CONGRESSIONAL CEMETERY

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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

This year certainly seemed to go by fast, with the combination of terrific programming and several large construction projects to supervise. We also completed a survey of our available sites for sale, and you may be surprised that we have just over 5,000 sites either identified as for sale on our digital map, or ones that can be reclaimed. Half of these were never sold nor occupied – verified by our records and confirmed by our ground penetrating radar mapping.

We sell an average of 45 sites a year, so that means if we continue at the same pace, it would take 55 years to exhaust our inventory. That is terrific news for a cemetery that has been in operation for almost 211 years. Many historic cemeteries obviously suffer income declines as the space is filled up, and have little other methods to replace revenue. We contribute a portion of every sale to our endowment held by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, so that quarterly distributions in perpetuity will continue to maintain and restore this National Historic Landmark.

Congressional is actually adding real estate in the form of columbariums as cremation rates continue to increase across the country and especially in well-educated urban areas like Washington, DC, where they can reach 65% of all deaths. We locate the structures on land that is unsuitable for full burials so as to not diminish our capacity for burial space.

And what about those sites we could potentially reclaim that I mentioned? The standard industry poli-

cy is to wait 75 years after a site was purchased and never used to begin a legal reclaiming process. However, Congressional waits for a full 125 years after a site was purchased and never used, just to make sure that individual was obviously buried elsewhere or cremated. Rest assured, we do not include family sites, only individual sites scattered throughout the cemetery, and only a few per year. After an attempt to locate living family members, we advertise a legal notice in a local paper for reclamation.

Our financials remained strong this year, and it seems that we are officially a \$1 million non-profit, having surpassed that income milestone in mid-November. We will brief you on the year-end financials in the next newsletter, and in the meantime, check out the Around the Gatehouse feature for some interesting preservation projects we are planning for 2018.

—Paul K. Williams, President

### BRICK & LAMP FUNDRAISERS

Holidays and anniversaries are a great time to reserve your engraved brick at Congressional Cemetery, installed along the 9/11 path. Each brick purchased for just \$25 helps us raise funds for the hard-

scape and landscape of our newly restored front gate. Each 4" x 8" brick can be customized and dedicated to individuals, pets, or businesses, and a duplicate ¼" brick with a felt bottom can be added for home use.

Newly designed Victorian solar lampposts can also be sponsored or dedicated for \$500; these lamps have an improved bulb that mimics a gas lamp. We are installing them along our roadways and pathways, and they add just enough ambient light without being too bright.

Visit our website at [www.congressionalcemetery.org/](http://www.congressionalcemetery.org/) for order forms and more information.



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

*Legal Name:* The Association for the Preservation of Historic Congressional Cemetery  
*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**

## SOUL STROLLS



Two DC madams who ran very different establishments. A Union captain who traded war secrets for the “favors” of a Confederate spy. Add in an eccentric sculptress, an opinionated founder of the Daughters of the War of 1812, and a reluctant but brilliant cartographer, and you have the cast of our third annual Soul Strolls. The event sold out yet again, bringing a record number of visitors through Congressional Cemetery’s gates over the course of four October nights. This year, VIP guests visited a speakeasy in the Public Vault, where they sipped cocktails from Green Hat Gin and chatted with other Prohibition-era “residents.” Stay tuned for this event next year, debuting a whole new cast of characters willing to tell you their compelling stories.

## DAY OF SERVICE

So many projects were completed during the annual 9/11 Day of Service this year by our impressive 235 volunteers, it is difficult to choose where to begin. Members from all of the military branches worked tirelessly creating a new, 200-foot-long gravel path, re-laid the 9/11 path, painted our historic fence and family vaults, pulled weeds, cleaned mausoleums, and cut back the ever encroaching woods. In just four hours on a beautiful fall Saturday, a total of 940 person-hours made an immediate impression on the cemetery, and we thank them!

## ADAPTIVE REUSE OF THE WILSON-BARTON MAUSOLEUM



Congressional Cemetery has a rather rare opportunity that is unique to a historic cemetery – we have a large granite mausoleum along Mausoleum Row that was built in 1892 that was used, but now sits vacant. That is because during our dark period in the 1980s and

1990s, the family decided to disinter those located there and bury them in another cemetery. They ceded the structure itself back to the cemetery in 1988. The likelihood of a family purchasing a 20-crypt structure and renovating it was very low.

HCC commissioned a structural engineering report in 2017 that determined the non-historic crypts could be removed and the granite slab roof, with alterations, could support an open space measuring 6 feet by 11 feet. In 2018, we plan to add a green roof and skylight, restore the exterior, and demolish the interior, while drawing up plans to create cremation niches along the renovated interior walls. There is already lots of interest, and we are quite sure this might be the only Victorian-era building with a modern niche interior when the project is complete, likely in 2019.

## PET COLUMBARIUM

The HCC Board voted in its November meeting to construct a columbarium dedicated to pets, to be located near the popular ‘doggie day spa,’ our naturally occurring small pond where rarely an hour goes by that one can’t find a “K9” swimming about. Our red foxes enjoy a bit of a swim in the summer months as well. The Buildings and Grounds Committee will research and select a freestanding design, and we will demarcate the site with a bronze statue of a dog or two.

Although it's sad to use this space for farewells rather than hellos, a few members of the Congressional Cemetery community remember Beverley Lumpkin, who passed away in October. You may notice a common theme in our anecdotes.



**Beverley (far right) as part of a group prepping for the 2014 Day of the Dog.** Photo Credit: Victor Romero.

Beverley Lumpkin was one of those extraordinary non-profit volunteers that anyone is fortunate to encounter. She literally volunteered for every Committee we have (sometimes up to eight simultaneously), while always being here after her hectic workday to collect tickets, run the bar, and wrangle dogs. I once made an early rookie mistake of not spelling her name with an extra “e,” something that drove spellcheck crazy, but I learned my lesson quickly! Beverley was the reason all of our banners, posters, and flyers never had a single spelling mistake or grammatical error — and we would hear about it if they did. She graciously led our staff and summer interns on a rare behind-the-scenes tour of the art deco Department of Justice building where she worked, and became a friend to the entire cemetery community. We will miss her light-hearted demeanor and always smiling face.

—Paul Williams, HCC President

My relationship with Beverley began with a spark of irritation—one that was most assuredly mutual. Beverley and I had been corresponding about volunteering for an event, and throughout our back-and-forth I consistently and ignorantly spelled her name incorrectly, not noting that she started signing off on the emails as BeverLEY. Finally, she pointedly wrote “BeverLEY—please note the spelling!” I was a little embarrassed but more than a little irritated, and Beverley and I were short with each other for a while.

I started to work more with Beverley as she was a tireless volunteer, serving on all three of the Cemetery's committees and coming out for nearly every possible event. Through these interactions, I found that yes, she was a tad sensitive about the spelling of her name (as a former AndersEn and current Maloy - not Malloy, I understood), but Beverley really just knew what she wanted; more importantly, she expected the best from the people around her. She was savvy, unapologetic, and the biggest grammar stickler I think I'll ever know. From time to time she continued to send me emails noting an error I made on a press release or an event poster, and I won't lie - those notes continued to irritate me just a little. But Beverley just couldn't help herself, and I'm glad that she didn't, as she certainly kept me in line. I'll miss having BeverLEY checking up on me.

—Lauren Maloy, HCC Program Director

It was always a fun time when I got to stop and chat with Beverley and Killer Chrissy (Chrissy had a talent for annihilating HCC squirrels). I'll miss her enthusiastic waves from across the cemetery and her warm Instagram comments under my plant pictures.

—Crystina Darden, HCC Front Office Manager

In a tribute from her sister Heather at the memorial, mention was made of her insistence on her name being spelled correctly. It made me smile, as that was one of my favorite memories of Beverley:

Beverley would take no excuse - not auto-correct, nor forgetfulness, nor just being uninformed. Her name was spelled with three E's, and she let you know it. Three E's. Beverley.

Elegant. Eloquent. Ebullient.

She made it easy to remember, and Beverley will never be forgotten.

Christine Romero, K9 Corps Member

## ANNE ROYALL: A COMMON SCOLD

BY ROBERT POHL

Congressional Cemetery is the final resting place of a number of strong women from throughout history. None epitomizes this more than Anne Royall, who revolutionized journalism in the first half of the 19th Century.

Born Anne Newport in 1769, her family soon moved to what was then the frontier: Western Virginia. She there married William Royall, a wealthy farmer. This should have left her set for life even after his death, but her nephew contested the will that left Mr. Royall's money to her, and Royall found herself destitute after the nephew won.

Royall picked herself up and started anew, as a writer. She wrote some ten books of her impressions of traveling throughout the new United States, as well as a novel. During this time, when not traveling, she lived on Capitol Hill, and she was here, working on the third of her so-called 'black books,' when she got into a fight with the local Presbyterian church. Royall had a number of issues with the denomination, not the least of which was that they used the chamber of the House of Representatives for their services, but also that her maid had born a child bearing a close resemblance to "Holy Willy," as Royall referred to their minister.

The feud escalated, with church members loudly praying outside her door, while local youth threw stones at her window. Royall responded in kind, giving all sorts of unflattering nicknames to the church mem-

bers who were besieging her: "Young Mucklewrath, Pompey Poplarhead, Tom Oystertongs, Sally Smark, Hallelujah Holdfork, Miss Dina Dumpling, Miss Riggle, and the Miss Dismals."

The upshot was that Royall was arrested and charged with being "a public nuisance, a common brawler, and a common scold." She was dragged into court and tried. The trial appears to have been a bit of a farce, as typified by the exchange with Henry Tims, a doorkeeper in the Senate. When Tims was asked "if he

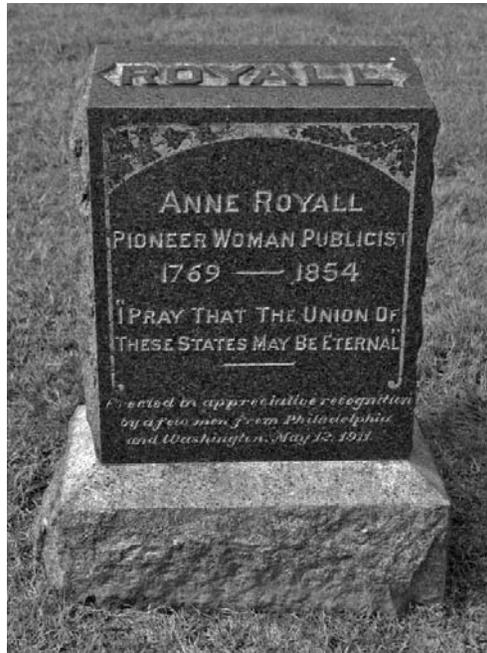
knew of Mrs. Royall slandering anybody" he replied "Yes, she has slandered me. She has said that I am a very exemplary man – now that's a slander."

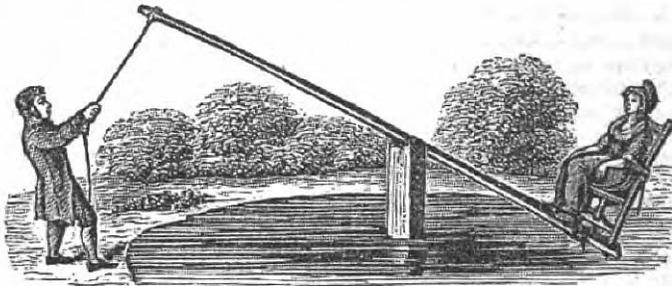
In the end, only the charge of being a common scold stuck – which was a problem, as this was not really a crime in Washington, but had been under English law that had once been in force in the Province of Maryland. Even worse, the only punishment prescribed for this offense was a ducking, something that had not been carried out in England in several decades.

Nonetheless, the good carpenters at the Washington Navy Yard built a model of a ducking chair and presented it to the court.

Before a full-sized version could be built, however, saner heads prevailed and Royall's punishment was converted into a fine, which was paid by a number of her admirers. Royall went home to finish her book, and the Presbyterians presumably went back to praying.

Eventually, Royall settled down on Capitol Hill, though only in the physical sense. While she no longer wrote books, she now published newspapers, at first





*Punishment by the Ducking-Stool.*

Paul Pry, later The Huntress. While these periodicals had more than a little whiff of blackmail — failing to renew your subscription was a sure ticket to having your character assailed in the following issue — Royall also invented a tool that has become a mainstay of modern journalism: the interview.

It is the last that has led to an intriguing, but unfortunately false, tale to be attached to Royall, that when John Quincy Adams was President, and partial to skinnydipping in the Potomac, Royall once garnered an interview with him by sitting on his clothes and not allowing him to exit the water until he had satisfactorily answered her questions.

Sadly, there is no way this can be true, as Royall was not yet in the news business when Adams was President, and the interviews she did have with him later were marked by a great cordiality.

When Royall died at the ripe old age of 85, she had not regained the wealth that she had had earlier in her life, but she had made a name for herself that will outlast many richer people. 

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### Major Preservation Projects *continued from page 1*

cent of the historical material was reused in the new configuration and the removal of the 1923 brick columns has opened up the space and replicated the original 1856 appearance of our primary front entrance.

We expect to collect bids in early 2018 for phase two, hardscaping and landscaping around the gate and the replacement of a very rough roadway.

### HAVENNER VAULT

Many of you have also been witnessing the slow demise of the Havenner family vault, located just east of the chapel on our major road. It was losing bricks and its corner piers were being pushed over by the weight of the sandstone cap. The door had long been sealed with brick, and the barrel vault roof structure was entirely held together by the soil that had replaced the mortar long ago. Well, after a \$29,000 preservation makeover, the vault is completely restored.

DMC Masonry Restoration of Baltimore completed the work, assisted by our new grounds conservation manager Kymberly Mattern and our summer intern Gabe Harper. The marble monument was carefully cleaned using a D2 biological solution that works over

time, whitening the structure in a few months.

### HYATT VAULT

What appears to be a white marble monument atop a brick foundation is actually the Hyatt family stone, which sits atop a large brick vault located underground. While we knew the bricks needed pointing, we did not realize the extent of the deterioration to the massive vault below. The weight threatened to collapse the entire structure, so it was time to restore the monument in its entirety at a cost of \$5,000.

*Continued on page 9*



**Hyatt Vault before.**

## SHAWN FREEMAN

Last fall I attended a project management course at Stanford University where I learned how critical both the facts and the stories behind the facts are to understanding the motivation for someone's actions. The professor recommended conducting an interview to extract the stories (the why) behind facts (the what). In order to draw out my Congressional Cemetery story, I asked HCC Program Director Lauren Maloy to interview me.

**The Fact:** Shawn, you became a site owner at Congressional in 2012. Why did you decide to buy a plot here?

**The Story:** I have been intrigued by Congressional ever since I served as treasurer of Christ Church in the 1990s and learned that the church owned the cemetery. When my husband and I moved back to Capitol Hill in 2012 after 15 years living in my home state of Alabama, we began exploring HCC. We took a tour and immediately fell in love with the spirit of the space. We were already thinking of DC for our retirement, and when we spotted a notice in the church bulletin about plots for sale, we got in touch with the HCC staff. We explored several locations and finally picked a prime plot near a sidewalk, a bench, and one of the dog water bowls. Did you know that one plot at Congressional can hold either two bodies or six cremains? That seemed like a great deal to us!

**The Fact:** Shawn, your dog Izzy has been a member of the K9 Corps at Congressional since 2013. Why did you sign up for the K9 Corps?

**The Story:** As I said, the spirit of Congressional Cemetery is special. The combination of old tombstones, green space, running dogs, and friendly owners makes it an irresistible location for leisurely walks. We joined the K9 Corps as an excuse to spend time walking among the trees and the 67,000 Cemetery residents, in spite of the fact that Izzy hates being off-leash

around other dogs. And Yappy Hour—a unique mash-up of happy and yappy dogs playing while their owners yap over happy hour drinks and snacks—is a great bonus benefit of K9 Corps membership!



**The Fact:** Shawn, you joined the Board of HCC in 2016 representing Christ Church, which owns the cemetery. Why did you want to serve on the Board of Directors?

**The Story:** Congressional Cemetery is simply my favorite place in DC. I'm bonded with it as a member of both Christ Church and the K9 Corps, and I have a stake in its (very) long-term preservation as a site owner. I am honored to be on the Board of Directors of the Association for the Preservation of Historic Congressional Cemetery, working to ensure that the cemetery remains physically and financially vital in perpetuity for both its current and future residents.

**The Fact:** Shawn, you have said that HCC is your favorite place in DC. Can you explain why?

**The Story:** Let me start by confessing that I have never been particularly interested in history. Ironically, HCC is the place that makes history come alive for me. The tours by the Dozen Decent Docents (motto: "We will talk about you after you're gone!") are like a walking story time, filled with anecdotes about the famous and infamous residents of the cemetery. For me, I feel the deepest connection to our country's history at the monument to the victims of the Arsenal Fire, when I realize that I am standing on ground where Abraham Lincoln walked. And I feel connections to my own his-

tory when I attend a funeral or walk past the graves of friends and neighbors.

Although Congressional Cemetery is rooted in the past, I enjoy it now—in the present. It's the first place that I take out-of-town guests for a unique DC experience, whether to hear the members of the United States Marine Band playing on Sousa's birthday or to watch goats grazing on kudzu and poison ivy. The Day of the Dog brings pure canine pandemonium to the grounds, with games and food and vendors creating a neighborhood fair atmosphere. I have enjoyed time in the chapel at Tombs and Tomes, our Cemetery-based book club, and at Notes from the Crypt, intimate live performances of free chamber music. The various Halloween events like Soul Strolls, featuring historic ghosts and contemporary cocktails, have delighted me with spooky stories among the tombstones.

I especially love sundown and sunrise at the Cemetery. My greatest sundown pleasure has been partici-

pating in all five of the DC Front Runners Pride Run 5K races, which start and end at the gay corner. I have run the race in all kinds of conditions, from typical Washington heat and humidity to one muddy race that was delayed by thunderstorms. My proudest moment came this year, when I won my age bracket for the first time in my more than 40 years of slow but steady running!

And my greatest HCC pleasure is the annual Easter sunrise service. The service is held outside around one of the table-shaped monuments, which serves as the altar. Dogs sit quietly at their owners' feet, while the attention of young children wanders in the chill morning air. The priest pronounces the benediction, and I do indeed feel blessed.

So Congressional Cemetery for me is its historical past, its active present, and its promising future. HCC is my forever home! 

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### Major Preservation Projects *continued from page 1*



Hyatt Vault during.



Hyatt Vault after.

DMC masonry and staff members worked on this project this summer, completely rebuilding one corner of brick at a time so the monument could stay in place. Once that was completed and a layer of green paint removed, a D2 biological solution was applied that temporarily draws dirt and debris from the marble.

And while it might appear we threw orange paint on the stone, after a few days and then months, the marble reveals its original stark white appearance.

### BRICK FENCE

You just know it is not a good thing when you lean on a seven-foot tall brick fence and watch as it moves six inches in either direction. We temporarily braced the fence and eventually hired Merlino construction to take it down, saving the historic brick for rebuilding. Because we had fortunately never been on the jail side of the fence, we were surprised to see that the ground level was a full three feet below the cemetery grounds on the other side. That, plus the discovery that an additional 40 feet of fence was unstable, led us to rebuild an impressive 120 feet of solid brick fence at a cost of \$84,000. Historic brick was reused on the interior, and a new concrete and fieldstone foundation with new brick was used for the exterior side of the fence. It should last another 125 years or so. 

# DUST TO DUST: A GUIDE TO GREEN BURIALS

BY KYMBERLY MATTERN

Each year in the United States, 22,500 traditional cemeteries put the following into the ground:

- 827,060 gallons of embalming fluid
- 30-plus million board feet of hardwoods
- 90,272 tons of steel
- 1,636,000 tons of reinforced concrete
- 14,000 tons of steel
- 2,7000 tons of copper and bronze

Furthermore, a typical ten-acre American cemetery has enough casket wood to make forty houses, at least nine hundred tons of steel from caskets and casket hardware, twenty thousand tons of vault concrete, and enough embalming fluid to fill a small swimming pool. Since Congressional Cemetery is comprised of roughly 35 acres, take those numbers and multiple them by 3.5 to understand approximately how much wood, steel,

concrete, and embalming fluid is under the ground at Congressional Cemetery.

Conventional burials typically include preserving a corpse through the practice of embalming, public viewing at a funeral home, transporting a corpse to a funeral home and a cemetery, and burial of the casket. These burials can potentially have numerous lasting negative effects on the environment. For instance, greenhouse gas emissions are produced by the use, manufacture, and transportation of embalming fluids, caskets, grave liners, and the frequent mowing of cemetery lawns. Metal caskets are a major concern in acidic soils due to the threat of leaching heavy metals, specifically iron, copper, lead, and zinc, into the surrounding ground and water sources. Wood caskets often consist of preservatives, varnishes, and sealants, many of which

contain arsenic and other harmful chemicals. Vaults made out of concrete, fiberglass, and asphalt, all of which are pollutants, also off-gas and leach pollutants. Furthermore, the harvesting, manufacturing, processing, and transportation of casket and vault materials also contribute to high energy use.

The process of cremation, which is becoming increasingly popular in the United States, is considered to be not as harmful for the environment when compared to conventional burials. Cremated remains, or “cremains,”

**A GREENER WAY TO GO**  
*From preparing bodies to burying them in natural settings, the green burial movement is attempting to make death more environmentally friendly and, in some ways, closer to the way it was in the past. A comparison:*

**STANDARD BURIAL**  
 Burials use formaldehyde embalming and long-lasting caskets. They can easily cost \$10,000.

A standard grave site, often landscaped and well-maintained, features a large headstone made of granite or flat bronze. Fertilizer and pesticides are used on the grass.

Below ground, a casket made of steel, finished wood and copper rests inside a concrete vault capped by a thick concrete lid.

**NATURAL BURIAL**  
 The natural, or green, burial method starts with the body preparation, which uses no embalming fluid or a nonformaldehyde-based formula. Green burials can cost less than \$2,000.

If there's a headstone, it's a rock or a piece of rough-cut limestone that's flat on one side to identify the deceased. Some methods use GPS coordinates to spot a grave's location.

Caskets are made of wood, plywood, bamboo, cardboard, cornstarch or wicker. Sometimes a shroud or quilt may be used to wrap the body.

Source: Nathan Butler

STEPHEN J. BEARD / The Star

are bones that have been processed into tiny particles after cremation. The process of cremation removes organic matter and bacteria from the bone, thus stopping the body's natural decomposition process. Ultimately, bones become stabilized and do not change when the cremains are scattered.

However, cremations are not entirely earth-friendly. Cremations release greenhouse gasses and other toxic chemicals into the environment. For instance, each cremation releases between .8 and 5.9 grams of mercury per cremated body. This totals to between 1,000 to 7,800 pounds of mercury released annually in the U.S. 75% of this mercury goes into the air and the remaining 25% of the mercury settles into the ground and water sources. Cremated remains consist of elements essential for plant and microbial life, including: nitrogen, phosphorous, potassium, calcium, magnesium, sulfur, and sodium. However, there is no probiotic potential for any of the elements in cremains due to high levels of sodium and a high alkaline pH of 11.8. Additionally, the average cremation uses 28 gallons of fuel to burn a single body, which emits about 540 pounds of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. A person could drive about 4,800 miles on the same amount of energy that it takes to cremate one person. Essentially, the chemical properties of cremains can minimize or prevent the natural nutrients found in bones from becoming active in the environment because ashes in their natural form are toxic to plants. Despite the environmental consequences of cremations, the Green Burial Council still recognizes cremation as a green burial option.

In the U.S., we have a growing consciousness about the importance of living sustainably and making environmentally-friendly decisions. But what about after life?

Do not fear—green burials are here! While there are



a limited number of green cemeteries in the United States, we are proud to say that Congressional Cemetery is an active green cemetery. A green cemetery is a cemetery that allows green burials. The main objective of a green cemetery is to create an environment that appears and functions like a natural environment. Green burials have many characteristics including: disposing of a corpse without using formaldehyde-based embalming; foregoing the use of environmentally-harmful concrete burial vaults; utilizing a locally-sourced and biodegradable shroud (a cloth used to wrap around a corpse), casket or urn; minimizing heavy and large equipment for burial and landscaping; reducing the use of gas powered equipment, such as lawn mowers, fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides; encouraging native plant growth; using natural means of weed and pest control, such as the use of goats or burning; and maintaining a gravesite that is marked with an engraved fieldstone or no stone at all. Some green cemeteries let native plants grow freely in the field to reduce the amount of fossil fuels required for mowing and maintaining the lawn. Regardless, with green burials, people tend to make efforts to plant native species that capture carbon and beautify the surrounding landscape. It is important to note that each individual cemetery decides where they are on the spectrum of “green,” and no two “green” cemeteries are alike. 🌿

*Yes!*

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

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

Special donation for the Sousa Gate Project:

Anonymous  Yes  No

Special donation for the Endowment:

Anonymous  Yes  No

Check enclosed, made payable to Congressional Cemetery

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My employer makes matching contributions. Please send me the matching gift form.

*Thank you!*

*Please mail with your donation to the return address on the mailing panel or use the envelope inside this newsletter.*



Association for the Preservation of  
Historic Congressional Cemetery

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| January 9   | Tombs and Tomes Book Club              |
| February 24 | Prospective Docent Information Session |
| March 20    | Tombs and Tomes Book Club              |
| March 24    | Dead Men's Hollow Concert              |
| April 7     | First Tour of 2018                     |



(Weird Al 2009- )

**THE PLACE FOR LIVE, YOUNG GOATS.**



(Alexander Rutherford 1814-1872)

**AND THE PLACE FOR DEAD, OLD GOATS.**

Green Burial Options  
Visit [CongressionalCemetery.org](http://CongressionalCemetery.org) for details  
(202) 543-0539