

The Association for the Preservation of
Historic Congressional Cemetery
Established 1807
Summer 2002 Newsletter

Stone Restoration Begins
Thirty Gravestones Repaired

Dean Ruedrich and his conservation crew arrived at Congressional Cemetery in early April to begin the gravestone restoration work funded by the Save America's Treasures matching grant. Getting right into it, they had seven gravestones mended and upright within two days. Two weeks later they had repaired well over twenty markers. Dean and his two assistants set up a demonstration of restoration techniques at our Spring Festival on April 20.

The restored gravestones are sandstone or marble from the 1800s and generally about two inches thick – not much margin for error. Using skill and steady nerves, they drill

(Continued on Page 3)

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**Spring Festival Is A Hit!**

**A Big Thanks to Our Sponsors!**

Mark your calendars for our next Spring Festival if you missed it this year -- it was a big hit. Despite forecasts of rain and thunder, we had beautiful weather for our April 20<sup>th</sup> Celebration and an attendance of about 200. Visitors were met at the front gate by the Zachary Taylor Tiger Volunteers from the Zachary Taylor Elementary School in Virginia, who created a great little garden by the gatehouse. Next

*(Continued on Page 5)*

**CHAMPS Breakfast**

**Lecturer on War of 1812**

The Capitol Hill Association of Merchants & Professionals hosted a welcome to new members (including Congressional) on May 15. The highlight of the 8:00 am gathering was a short lecture by historian and author Anthony Pitch. Pitch's book, The Burning of Washington, The British Invasion of 1814 is about one of the most exciting periods in the history of the United States.

Mr. Pitch described the courage of Dolly Madison's efforts to save priceless White House after all the military defenses had fled the city. (Dolly Madison lay in our Public Vault for several months.) He also noted Stephen Pleasanton (1777-1855), whose foresight just prior to the invasion saved the original copies of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, and papers of President George Washington. Pleasanton is interred at Congressional (R43/S244). In fact, over forty individuals named in Pitch's history are interred at Congressional. ?

**Contributions Lagging**

**Progress Requires Your Help**

Congressional Cemetery is poised to begin a great burst of restoration and innovation. Engineering studies will soon be under way to figure out exactly what needs to be fixed and what it will cost. Landscape plans are under way to map out our grounds use and future site designs. We have a wonderful abundance of volunteers for many projects. Our web site grows by the week and draws more and more site visits and inquiries. Site sales are soon to begin again. And all around us Capitol Hill is undergoing an exciting rejuvenation.

Yet our bank account is thread bare. The recession and tragedies of last year have left our contributors in a more cautious mood, which has made it tough to make ends meet here at Congressional. Despite a reduced lawn care contract this year, we are still very tight on our budget (see story on page 2). Our minimum operating costs can't be cut anymore without threatening the care of the cemetery. We need your help urgently.

Preserving America's heritage is what we're about and your contributions make that possible. There's an exciting future for Congressional – with your help. Please tear off the contribution slip on the back page and mail in your contribution today. ?

Contact us:  
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Washington, D.C. 20003  
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Fax: 202-543-5966  
[www.congressionalcemetery.org](http://www.congressionalcemetery.org)  
[congressionalcemetery@mail.org](mailto:congressionalcemetery@mail.org)

## More Insight on Web Site

Sandy Schmidt, our resident historian and member of the board, has a passion for keeping history alive. This penchant has led her to the local libraries for the past several years to collect stories of those interred at Congressional. As of last week she had added 15,000 obituaries to our web site. That's right: *fifteen thousand*. Many are just simple death notices and directions to funeral houses but others tell the harrowing details of tragic accidents, express the sorrow of a child's death in a touching poem, or provide testimonials to renowned public servants, like that of Major General Jacob Jennings Brown, Commander in Chief of the Army.



The collection of all these stories provides an invaluable insight into the history of Washington through the lives of all the ordinary men and women who called DC home. Except for Sandy's work, these folks may never have been heard from again. Now their lives live on, their stories may be told again.

We have much, much more to add to our web site. Volunteers are needed to continue bringing all the stories into the web site. To volunteer, call our office at 202-543-0539.

Unfortunately, Sandy is also our volunteer treasurer and is often bogged down by the bookkeeping. If we could hire a

bookkeeper, her time would be freed up to bring more history alive. But a competent bookkeeper costs about \$20 to \$25 an hour with a minimum of 5 hours a week. That adds up to about \$6,500 a year. Can you make a donation to help get Sandy back to the library? ?

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The Endowment Fund

How to Double your good works

Donating to Congressional Cemetery always makes you feel good but how would you like to feel twice as good about donating? We have a way of doubling your pleasure without costing you an extra dime! Simply make a contribution to our endowment fund.

Our endowment fund consists of two million-dollar grants from Congress. The first million was placed in the Endowment Fund with the National Trust in 1999 and the second million just this year. While that may sound like we're living on Easy Street, keep in mind that we only get to use the earnings off those funds – the principal is off limits. In fact we have access only to the earnings off the dollars that we *match*. We have raised \$200,000 to date.

Our \$200,000 provides us the earnings from \$400,000. That's enough for a few mowings of the lawn. The rest of the two million dollars is waiting patiently for your companion dollars. Once we match the two million, our lawn woes will be history and we can focus on preserving History.

Every dollar donated to the Endowment gets doubled. Please use the donation slip on the back page and make your donation today. You'll feel twice as good in the morning. ?

Our 2002 Budget

The Association's 2002 Annual Budget is now available on our web site. (Click on the link "About the Association," then click on the link at the left for the budget.) The budget is divided into the following major areas:

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| Landscape & Grounds -- | \$79,200 |
| Buildings & Utilities ---- | \$16,800 |
| Funeral Services ----- | \$4,500 |
| Stone Restoration ----- | \$109,000 |
| Public Awareness ----- | \$14,500 |
| Safety & Security ----- | \$3,500 |
| Organization & Staffing-- | \$39,000 |
| Total Operating Budget: | \$257,600 |

Most of the Restoration budget comes from the SAT grant which we already matched. But that leaves us with \$150,000 needed to make ends meet.

In addition, we set a very high goal for the Endowment Fund this year: \$250,000. We hope to put together a major fundraising event this fall, so keep an eye out for more details on how you can help in the coming newsletters. ?

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## **Landscape Overview Nearing Completion**

Virginia Tech's Department of Landscape Architecture, headquartered in Old Town, Virginia, has completed this semester's design studio. Virginia Tech adopted Congressional as a long range student-led project to develop our landscape master plan. The twenty or so landscape design and engineering students worked hard all semester examining our history, facilities, current usage, existing landscape features, and possibilities. We eagerly await a presentation on the students' work. ?

## **Restoration (Con't)**

channels from the break in the stone to within six inches from the top and then down deep into the base. Next they fill the channel with epoxy and insert a stainless steel rod. The gravestones are then reassembled and mortared together.



Removing rusted pins

To date the work concentrated on stones east of the chapel and has made a visible difference in the appearance of the yard. In early August, Dean's crew will bring in masonry conservators to tackle the Labbe Vault near the gatehouse. It's in pretty rough shape, although not the worst by far. They also hope to repair about eight table top and box monuments.

Although nothing can be done to stop the weathering of the inscriptions on the face, at least the pieces are again upright and ready for another fifty years of remembrance.

The team will be working in the cemetery for one week in late May, two weeks in mid June, and most of July. The work will help

provide cost estimates for the repairs needed in the rest of the yard.

The crew is wonderful at explaining what they are doing and how the repairs provide greater structural support to the stones. It is well worth a trip to the Cemetery to see their work in action and visit with Dean. ?



Drilling support shafts

## **Engineering RFPs Are Out Bid Winner Expected by July**

We received several responses to the requests for proposals for the Historic Resources and Cultural Landscape Assessment studies mandated by the \$250,000 grant appropriated by Congress last year. Several major firms bid on the chance to help Congressional Cemetery fulfill the dreams in its strategic plan. Road repair, water pipe replacements, re-slatting the chapel roof, ground stabilization, and crypt repair are just the beginning of our restoration wish list. These studies will help us set our priorities as well as put price tags on all these long-awaited projects. The selection process will be directed by the Office of the Architect of the Capitol. ?

## **Congressional on the Map DC Metro Stops to Add Signs**

DC's Metro System will be installing new interpretive signs at the Potomac Avenue and Stadium Armory stops on Capitol Hill. The signs will highlight Congressional Cemetery with a description of the Cemetery's history and photographs of a horse drawn hearse by the chapel, the Marine Corps Band playing by Sousa's graveside, and an overview of the grounds.

Along similar lines, the 8<sup>th</sup> Street/Barracks Row Main Street Project will be adding interpretive signs along 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Southeast. Of particular interest will be a sign noting the location of the home of William Prout (1753-1823), one of the major Capitol Hill land owners back in 1807 and a founder of Washington Parish Burial Ground, now known as Congressional cemetery. His elegant box tombstone is right behind the gatehouse at Range 56/Site 33. ?

## **MacPherson Art Show**

Association member Peter MacPherson's photographs will be at Results The Gym (3<sup>rd</sup> & G St, SE) from June 20 through August 1<sup>st</sup>. Peter's introspective views of the Cemetery premiered at a show sponsored by Christ Church last year where he sold over 30 works. The works can be viewed and purchased during the gym's normal hours; all net proceeds go to the Association. ?

## **Newsletter Sponsors**

Many thanks to our Newsletter sponsors: Lewis Gautieri, Frank Devlin, Patrick Crowley, Cynthia Moses, Beverly Bell, and Kevin Hildebrand, Patrick & Elizabeth McElroy, Mark & Libby Gitenstein.

## **Congressional's American Heritage** **William Boyd & The Underground Railroad**

Legend has it that Congressional Cemetery was once a stop on the Underground Railroad, runaway slaves were said to have hidden in the old vaults. We don't have any evidence to support or refute this story. But, we do know a little about William Boyd (Range 5 Site 222) who in his day was a well-known abolitionist and active participant in the Underground Railroad. His story is an interesting one that deserves to be told in much more detail than we have room for here, but briefly...

William Boyd was born in Northern Ireland in 1820 and learned the tailor's trade. He later engaged in selling herbal medicines and acquired the title "Dr." He was a man of strong conviction and extreme views, being an atheist and radical member of the temperance movement. He arrived in Washington, D.C. about 1848 and quickly gained a reputation for taking whatever risk necessary to help a slave obtain his or her freedom. One of his earliest adventures is described in *The Evening Star*, February 14, 1884:

Slaves belonging to citizens of this District and members of Congress had been mysteriously missed for sometime, and considerable uneasiness was felt and people were on the alert. Boyd had been suspected, and on this occasion, Capt. Goddard, of the auxiliary guard, was out in the county looking for the underground railway. The slaves had been missed, and quite a commotion had been raised throughout the city. Capt. Goddard and his posse got on the

trail of them in Montgomery County, Md., and came up with Boyd's carriage in the night, and ordered a halt, Boyd giving no attention to the order except to cut his horses with the whip, putting them in a lively trot. Taking advantage of a steep hill, Capt. Goddard took a fence-rail from the side of the road and ran it through the spokes of the hind wheels of the vehicle and locked them. Possession was at once taken of the team and its contents, and all were brought back to the tavern corner 8th and D streets. The slaves were returned to their owners, and Boyd was sent to the penitentiary.

It is not surprising then that William Boyd was a supporter of John Brown's movement. It is not known whether the two ever met, but, following the raid on Harper's Ferry, Boyd is reputed to have hidden one of Brown's supporters and, with the aid of Senator Charles Sumner, arranged for his escape. During the Civil War he served the Union and was elected to one term on the board of common council under Mayor Sayles Bowen.

On June 10, 1865, an unfortunate incident occurred that once again demonstrated Boyd's unflinching bravery and commitment to the principles in which he believed. The *Evening Star* announced:

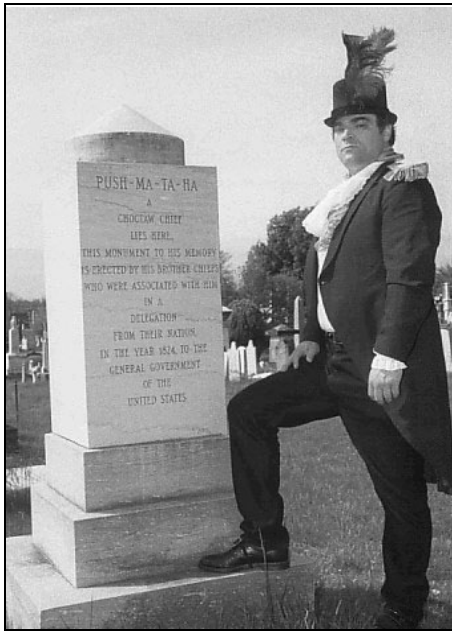
*Desperate Riot -- Brutal Assault  
upon Negroes by Soldiers!!  
Houses Quitted and Property  
Destroyed!!  
Dr. Wm. Boyd Assailed and Terribly  
Injured by the Rioters!!*

During the riot, drunken soldiers attacked the homes of

several black residents of southwest Washington. Dr. Wm. Boyd, living nearby, went out with a revolver in hand, and demanded peace. A soldier struck him in the face with a brick, fracturing his cheek and jaw, and destroying the sight in one eye. Another was "in the act of cleaving his head open with an ax," when a number of women stepped in and succeeded in persuading them to spare his life. Dr. Boyd lay at the point of death for several days and never fully recovered from his injuries.

Misfortunes aside, William Boyd enjoyed the friendship and loyalty of many interesting and influential men. His friends saw to it that his wife and children were cared for during his numerous stays in prison and at the beginning of Lincoln's administration they succeeded in obtaining a pardon from the President. With the help of Hon. Owen Lovejoy, his son was appointed a page in the House of Representatives.

William Boyd died of a stroke on February 13, 1884, at his residence in D.C. at the age of 63, leaving behind a wife, Martha, a daughter, Martha, and three sons: William J., Ledru R., and Charles A.B. Boyd. His wife (d. 1904) and unmarried daughter (d. 1896) rest with him. His eldest son, William (d. 1908) and his family are interred in Range 19 Sites 196-197. Ledru (d. 1913) and his wife & daughter were removed to Glenwood Cemetery. We do not know the final resting place of Charles' family or whether there are any living descendants. ?



*Choctaw Chief Pushmataha*

**Festival** (Con't.)

the RuthAnn Ovebeck Histories Project demonstrated their fantastic collection of first-person recollections of life on Capitol Hill. At noon, the Woodrow Wilson High School Band kicked into high gear with a rendition of our own John Philip Sousa's Washington Post. And at 1:00, Clara Boone led a wreath laying ceremony at the monument to the Old Methodist Burial Ground which was moved to Congressional in 1893.

Throughout the day seven historic characters were on hand to greet guests and chat about their lives way back when. Elbridge Gerry, Mathew Brady,

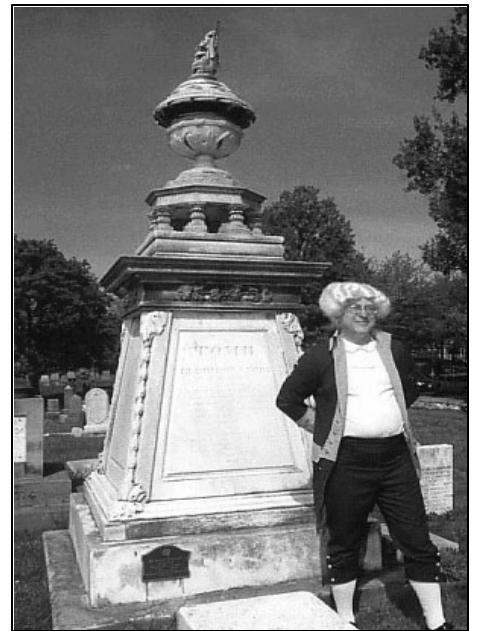


*Journalist Anne Royall*

Ann Royall, Pushmataha, Joseph Nicollet, John Hunter, and Mary Hall were beyond doubt the hit of the Festival. You can read more about their lives in our web site.

We also had the pleasure of two themed tours: Bill Allen of the DC Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution led tours of the veterans of the Revolutionary War and Michael Hendron led interpretive gravestone art tours.

We also showcased our other assets: Jim Oliver presented our genealogy resources, Dawn Warfle explained our educational programs, Peter MacPherson displayed his photography work, Jeremy Foster gave us a peek at the Virginia Tech landscape



*Patriot Elbridge Gerry*

plans, and Fred Davis and Sam Kilpatrick manned the Association's booth.

Finally, we extend a great big thank you to our sponsors for the day: Ginko Gardens, Jackie von Schlegel, Bonnie Peregoy, Ann Scheidler, Lucinda Janke, Sam Kilpatrick, Rob & Audrey Nevitt, Joni Bell, Heather Scott, Union Veterinary Clinic, Historic Christ Church, Ken Jarboe, Ernie Antignani, the DC Sons of the American Revolution, Jana Novak, Jane Mergler, Margaret Hobbs, and our big sponsors: Bayview Mortgage Inc. and The Capitol Hill Restoration Society. ?



## **Volunteer Opportunities**

If breaking a sweat out in our yard isn't your cup of tea, we have other volunteer opportunities where you can set your cup of tea next to your PC and still make a very big contribution.

You may recall that Jim Oliver photographed the whole Daily Log Book last year. All that data is waiting for some intrepid souls to enter it into a data base. Sandy Schmidt of our board has it all set up and ready for you to sit down and type the day away.

We also have lots of deed transfers, death certificates, and similar site specific paperwork from over the ages that needs to be sorted and filed. It's the kind of work that doesn't take brains – but it does take a generous heart.

If you have a few hours a month to donate, it would make a big difference in chipping away at these major projects. Call the gatehouse to find out about volunteering: 202-543-0539. ?

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Web Site Donations

As part of our drive to make Congressional Cemetery a resource for personal, local, and national history, we are constantly on the lookout for old newsclips, biographies, obituaries, and photographs of and about those interred at Congressional.

If you have any odds and ends about your relatives at Congressional, please make copies or scans and send them to us for inclusion in our web site. And don't worry if your kin ain't famous – we especially like to hear about our “average” families. That's where the real story of Congressional's American Heritage lies. And it's probably up in your attic waiting for you. ?

National Join Hands Day & Matching Grant Challenge

Northern Virginia's Lutheran Brotherhood volunteers returned to Congressional Cemetery for the annual National Join Hands Day on June 15th. They brought many more hands this year: 50 some volunteers to trim and rake and mend fences. Contingents from the Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Boys & Girls Club of DC, and Lutheran Brotherhood Branches 8057, 6763, 4769, and 6181 rolled up their sleeves at 9 am and packed it in at noon. To “join hands” next year or seek more information call Jim Brookshire at 703-866-9092.

In addition to all this sweat equity, the Lutheran Brotherhood established a matching grant challenge for us. The Lutheran Brotherhood, Northern Virginia Branch #8057 (“Team Service”), sponsored a matching grant challenge for restoration at Congressional through its Branch Challenge Fund. Contributions received by June 15, 2002, were matched (up to \$1,188) on a dollar for dollar basis. ?

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## **Victorian Picnic**

### **Group Donates \$425 to HCC**

A small time warp opened up on Capitol Hill Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, allowing a group of picnickers from the Victorian Era to visit Congressional Cemetery. The group, led by Association supported Robert Preiss, dressed in festive historic costumes for the day and took a tour of the yard. The group donated \$425 to Congressional. ?

## **Newsletter Sponsorship?**

We need sponsors for our next newsletter – can you help us out?

## **Trees in Trouble**

### **Cong. Cem. Canopy Campaign**

A quick intense windstorm whipped across Capital Hill on May 14<sup>th</sup>, leaving many downed and damaged trees in its wake, including several of ours. Seven of our trees lost big limbs, closing the roads for an afternoon. Luckily, one of our volunteers, Nick Sundt, showed up with a chain saw to re-open the roads.

The bad news, however, is that we have several tremendous old trees that need to come down. We have at five trees that died over the last two years and four towering oak trees that are on their last legs. They all present a continuing danger to those strolling along the grounds. One glance up into the 100-foot high barren canopy is enough to see that it won't be long before their limbs start to fall.

Aside from the danger they present to visitors, these falling limbs can cause extensive damage to historic gravestones and crypts. Trees of this size require the work of professional tree removal services using specialized trucks and equipment. But our current funding situation is simply not sufficient to get this kind of work done.

Given the loss of several big trees over the last few years and the need to take down several more, some members of the Association have suggested a Congressional Cemetery Canopy Campaign to raise the funding necessary to remove the dying trees and bring in replacements.

We anticipate tree removal costs will run about \$3,000 this year. Please consider joining our Canopy Campaign with a contribution this summer. ?

## Annual Meeting Appreciations

*Bob Dean* served as our volunteer coordinator at the Cemetery last year. A tremendous asset to the Association, he worked closely with volunteers on special clean-up projects, tracked our dogwalker data base, and assisted with burials and family research. Most importantly, he went above and beyond the call of duty, giving many hours beyond those he was paid for. Bob has many fans among the Association supporters. Bob could not be present to accept the plaque we made in his honor due but we wish him well and thank him for his dedication to the Cemetery. ?

*Bill Boswell* served as both a volunteer data base manager and a paid bookkeeper from October 2001 to May 2002. He is leaving us to move west. Bill worked with our treasurer to assure that the books and data bases were in good order. He often volunteered to staff the office on Saturdays. He was a great help to genealogy researchers. We were pleased to present Bill with a plaque and gift for his efforts, and bid him fare well as he heads west. ?

+ + +

*Jim Oliver*, past chair of the Association, was honored for his stewardship of the cemetery through some very difficult years. Jim kept the doors open and built a solid foundation for the board's future efforts. His volunteer work has not stopped: Jim conducts special tours of the cemetery, photographs our historic documents, and leads the Congressional Page volunteers in their efforts. We presented Jim with a plaque and announced that a previously un-named road within the cemetery will be named in his honor: "Oliver Way." Thank you, Jim. ?

## Congressional Cemetery Honor Roll

Without the help of our many volunteers, the daunting task of keeping Congressional Cemetery humming would be overwhelming. We'd like to say thanks to our many volunteer groups.

Lutheran Brotherhood Join Hands Day  
Jim Oliver's Document Photography  
U of M Alpha Phi Omega Fraternity Day  
Annual Spring Clean-up Day volunteers  
Bob Dean's Volunteer Coordination  
K-9 Tom Sawyer Party (Office Painting)  
Congressional Pages – Filing Party  
Sandy Schmidt's Web Site Work  
Paul Etter's Gatehouse Repair Work  
Singles of Washington Raking & Bagging  
K-9 Fall Yard Sale Collections & Sales  
Congressional Pages Raking & Bagging  
Gail Martin's Pick-Up Truck at our disposal  
DC Department of Public Works  
Mason Brothers Guided Walking Tours  
United Way of Virginia  
Bill Boswell's Data Base Management  
The Chipper David & Virginia Wall Family  
Bob Dalton's Backhoe Repair  
Cynthia Moses' March Clean Sweep

Mike Flanigan's Guided Tours  
Peter MacPherson's Photography Show  
The K-9 Road Repair Gang  
Michael Hendron's Gravestone Art Tours  
Professional Lawn Care Association  
Sandy Schmidt Tree Planting  
Taylor Tigers Elementary School  
Mason Brothers Stone Resetting Workshops  
US Military Reservists Volunteers Day  
Nick Sundt's Tree Removal  
The K-9 K-Club Fund Drive  
US Dept of Education (furniture)  
Dick Stock's Maple Trees  
Woodrow Wilson High School Band  
Georgetown Day Students  
Sons of the American Revolution  
Audrey & Brook Jones' Chapel Painting  
Patrick Crowley's Festival Organization

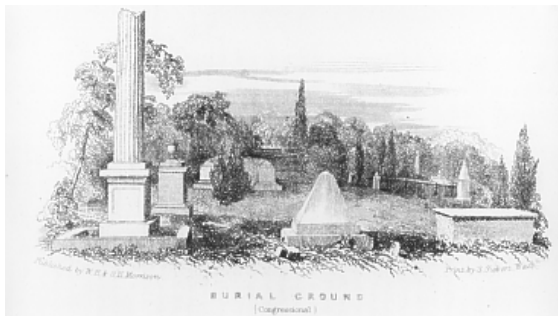
## Association Board Members

Linda Harper – Chair, Melvin Mason – Vice Chair, Sandy Schmidt – Treasurer, Patrick Crowley – Secretary, Dudley Brown, Dick Stock, Fred Davis, Lisa Rauschart, Rev. Dr. Judith Davis, Carolyn Cheney, Dawn Warfle, Sam Kilpatrick, and Kevin Hildebrand.

The Association for the Preservation of  
 Historic Congressional Cemetery  
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 Washington, DC 20003

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Your Summer 2002  
 Newsletter Is Here!



**Volunteers in Action**

Congressional Cemetery is blessed with a very dedicated base of volunteers. With every tree that falls, our urban foresters are ready with their chain saws. And every clean-up brings out all the rakers and baggers we can use. Sweat equity is our strong suit. But with mowing season upon us we need to employ professionals - 33 acres is just a tad more than a volunteer base can handle. That means we need your donations to help pay the bill. Can you send us a check today? ?



------(Tear here)-----

Please join us in Preserving & Restoring America's first National Cemetery –  
 Invest in America, renew your Membership today!

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_ I am interested in volunteering \_\_\_\_

? Contributor \$50    ? Donor \$100    ? Sponsor \$250

? Patron \$500    ? Benefactor \$1,000?    Founder \$2,000