Get Ready to Run!

Lace up your running shoes and get those old bones moving – it’s finally time for Congressional Cemetery’s Dead Man’s Run 5K. We’ve been hearing all summer from folks who want another chance to try to outrun the grim reaper. So we’re proud to announce the date is Saturday October 6th, when the leaves on our tallest trees will be starting to turn gold. And just to ratchet up the beauty factor, we’ve made it a twilight run this year, starting at 6 p.m. We’ve also added a short Fun Run for the kids. But if you loved last year’s run, don’t turn over in your grave about the changes; the race course covers the same familiar haunts: starting at the Chapel, through the cemetery grounds, out onto the RFK access road along the Anacostia, and back again. And you can be sure our well-shod, dead-sexy skeleton will be running across the t-shirts again this year. What bone structure that guy has – and he never seems to work up a sweat!

Last year’s race was a howling success, bringing in much-needed money for cemetery preservation and education. And now we know there are at least 500 people in Washington who think they can stay a step ahead of death. Are you one of them? As one of the only evening runs in town, the race is sure to fill up early, so register soon. All registration will be online this year, no mail-in forms for the dead letter office. You can find the registration link at www.congressionalcemetery.org. And you can find all the gory details inside this newsletter. Check out pages 6&7.

Historic Congressional Cemetery: The Book

We are delighted to announce that our new book has been published by Arcadia Press and is now available for purchase! With gorgeous photographs on every page, Historic Congressional Cemetery explores the wonderfully rich history of this enchanting place. Visit www.congressionalcemetery.org to order your copy.
Letter from the Chair

PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

In 1842, when George Watterson was revising his “New Guide to Washington”, he devoted eight and a half pages to describing the Congressional Burial Ground in florid prose. At the time, newer cemeteries were designed to look like gardens, with winding paths and little ponds and arbors. Congressional’s grid design preceded that trend, as Watterson acknowledged. “The Congressional burial ground may not be compared at present to the Pére Lachaise, near Paris, or Mount Auburn, in the vicinity of Boston,” he wrote. “But I know of no other cemetery in this country superior to it in beauty of site, the neatness, cleanliness, and arrangement of the grounds, or the number, and , in a few cases, the beauty, of monuments and tombs.”

Watterston, who would eventually be buried in the Watterson-Hamilton Vault (R32/S201), knew the power of this place was unique. “As a burial ground, partly national, great architectural might be united to fine horticultural taste, and thus form a retreat to which stranger as well as the citizen would feel a melancholy pleasure in repairing, to tranquilize the agitations of feeling, while meditating in solitude amid the silent repositories of the dead.”

One hundred seventy years after Watterston wrote those words, they remain true. Congressional Cemetery is a tranquil retreat, and the “stranger as well as the citizen” feel welcome here. We as a cemetery are committed to being true to that history while we innovate to stay relevant in the twenty-first century.

What luck then, that we have Paul K. Williams to lead us as we move forward. In July, Paul came on board as the new President of the Association for the Preservation of Historic Congressional Cemetery. The author of several local history books with background in historic preservation and research, Paul has the reverence for history necessary to understand this hallowed ground.

At the same time, Paul knows what it takes to lead us into the future. As executive director of Historic Dupont Circle Main Streets, Paul has tackled the very modern issues of infrastructure, tourism, revenue, and safety. He is a master at bringing disparate stakeholders together to mutually beneficial consensus. He even likes dogs.

Historic Congressional Cemetery has an illustrious past, a busy present, and a bright future.

—John Gillespie
Thanks to the efforts of our K-9 Corps, $4,000 dollars have been raised to date to be dedicated toward restoring some of our more unusual yet threatened stones. The money raised will enable us to restore multiple headstones, and the first two will be restored and up righted during the first two weeks of September by Jeff Raymond of Dignity by Design.

Known as the Lane Memorial, the first marker to be restored is situated not far from the Public Vault in Ranges 42 & 43, Sites 106-110. It’s a marble box type monument with four side panels and four corner supports that balance the heavy marble top and draped urn. It is the burial site of Charles H. Lane, a merchant on Pennsylvania Avenue who died on January 27, 1875.

The monument was built in 1854 to receive Lane’s wife Ann E. Lane, who died on March 28, 1854 at age 36. Their son Dr. Edward G. Lane was interred there during the Civil War, as were three infant children and a total of six other individuals; one of whom would have a famous name, albeit more than a century later: Nathan Lane (1865-1919).

Cemetery records indicate that the Lane Memorial was repaired once before, in 2002. This time around, Raymond intends to lift the top portion and urn from the base panels, remove the ten year old stainless steel threads that failed to keep the structure plumb, and insert new ones that will hold the side panels tight against the corner pieces. Joints will be filled with dyed-to-match lime based mortar manufactured by Virginia Lime Works for a water tight seal.

The top section with urn will be replaced to hold the lower panels together. The draped urn on top was a popular cemetery motif in the mid nineteenth century. According to Douglas Keister in Stories in Stone, “the drape can be seen as either a reverential accessory or as a symbol of the veil between earth and the heavens.” Etymologists claim the phrase “gone to pot” originally referred to the image of a cemetery urn, according to Keister.

The second stone that Raymond will repair can be found close by at Range 42, Site 111. This three part monument currently lays face down in the soil. The 166-year-old marker is the grave of William Henry, who was interred there in 1846. A lawyer and native of Kentucky, he died while serving an appointment at the Federal government’s Land Office.

The Henry memorial is composed of a base, long plinth, and carved cap. Raymond will first level the base, affix the plinth to the base with a thin layer of lime based mortar, plumb the stone with shims, and then affix the cap using the same material.

Barry Hayman, our grounds conservation manager, has located additional stones in immediate need of repair using the K-9 Corps fund, and we are in the process of getting quotes for those memorials. Look for before-during-and-after pictures on our social media and websites when the process is complete for these stones and future memorials restored by the K-9 Corps.

– PAUL K. WILLIAMS
Cemetery Book Party
The Congressional Cemetery book from Arcadia Press is a big hit! Order yours at www.congressionalcemetery.org. In early June, before the weather turned brutally hot, we threw ourselves a book party to celebrate. In our ongoing effort to make more of our events dog-friendly, Cemetery canines were invited. (Although, we made sure to keep the food in the chapel where the pooches couldn’t swipe it. We’re dog-friendly, not stupid.)

Outside a Dog Book Festival
Speaking of dog-friendly events, local authors (many of whom are members of our talented K-9 Corps) and their loyal dogs gathered for the first ever Congressional Cemetery Book Festival on a lovely afternoon in August. Books were sold and signed, cupcakes were consumed (thanks for the donation, Hello Cupcake Bakery!) and dogs were introduced and admired. As Groucho Marx said, “Outside of a dog, a book is a man’s best friend. Inside of a dog, it’s too dark to read.”

Independence Day
Congressional Cemetery now tweets! Follow us @CongCemetery. It’s a great way to get up-to-date information about news and events, plus 140-character tidbits of cemetery history. Not on Twitter? It’s easy to sign up at twitter.com.

QR Codes
Did you know Congressional Cemetery is now the world’s largest outdoor encyclopedia? Thanks to our friends at Wikipedia, cemetery visitors can now use their smart phones to scan QR codes (those funny black and white patterns you’re starting to see everywhere) at the graves of our more famous residents. Scanning the QR code

Architect George Hadfield’s gravestone and QR Code
HCC in the Media

Congressional Cemetery continues to receive excellent press both locally and nationally. This summer, Cemetery President Paul Williams was profiled in The Hill Rag and The Washington Blade. And Program Director Rebecca Roberts was interviewed for NPR’s Morning Edition, which also published a lovely slideshow on the NPR website. On TV, WJLA’s Greta Kreuz did a nice feature on the Wikipedia QR code project. The Washington Post Magazine included HCC’s Daniel Holcombe in a story about unusual summer internships. And the popular local blog DCist has a lengthy piece about our LGBT graves, illustrated with some beautiful photos. If you spot HCC in the news or on a blog, be sure to let us know!

NEW ARSENAL MEMORIAL

The Arsenal monument is one of the most striking sights in Congressional Cemetery. Sadly, 147 years after its installation, the engraved marble is starting to erode, and might soon be illegible. A group of Irish-Americans — led by Mike McCormack, of the Ancient Order of Hibernians in America, and HCC Docent Steve Hammond, of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War — raised money to design and produce a more permanent stone, listing the names of the young women who died in the Arsenal explosion in 1864. The stone has now been installed in the rose garden at the foot of the monument, preserving the victims’ names for many generations to come.

NEW STAFF

There are several new faces in the gatehouse, in addition to new director Paul Williams. In the mornings, you’ll find Lauren Maloy at the front desk. She recently earned her master’s degree in museum studies at George Washington University, and is now curating, among other things, our beloved K-9 Corps. If you don’t see Lauren at the front desk, she is probably in a dark corner somewhere, desperately trying to figure out how the ancient wiring on our phone system works.

New APHCC Vice-President Margaret Puglisi holds a Master’s in Fine Arts from the Savannah College of Art and Design. Intrepid Margaret has taken on the monumental task of updating our massive burial database. This is not simply a matter of data entry – Margaret can often be found out on the grounds probing gravesites where the records are uncertain or illegible. Happily, Margaret describes herself as a Cemetery Geek, so she thinks it’s fun.

ANNOUNCING OUR NEW CHAMBER MUSIC PROGRAM

Book writing is not the only talent lurking within our K-9 Corps. Dogwalker Eric de Waardt of the National Symphony Orchestra is organizing a series of chamber music concerts in our beautiful 1903 Chapel.

“We have four goals,” says de Waardt. “Give top-notch performers a chance to share their talents, make the Chapel a bigger part of the community by providing high quality chamber music, raise awareness of the cemetery, and raise money for the K-9 Corps.” The first concert, featuring works by Handel-Halvorsen, Mozart, Ravel, Piazzolla, and Dvorak, will start at 4pm on September 23rd. Check www.congressionalcemetery.org for details and future dates.

The Arsenal Explosion Victims written in stone

Meet the New Staff
Welcome to Historic Congressional Cemetery’s **Dead Man’s Run!**, a bare bones race for dead serious runners who want to stay one step ahead of the ultimate Reapo Man.

**Who:** The Association for the Preservation of Historic Congressional Cemetery  

**What:** A 5K benefit run  

**When:** Saturday, October 6, 2012 at 6:00 pm.  

**Where:** Historic Congressional Cemetery, 1801 E Street, SE, Washington DC  20003  

**Why:** For the restoration of America’s first national cemetery

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**COURSE:**  
The Run starts at the Chapel with the clang of the Tolling Bell, crosses the graveyard over freshly paved roads, passes through the east gate onto the Anacostia River Trail, heads south along the riverfront trail for ¼ mile, then back north to the East Capitol Bridge, then back along the River to the cemetery, and back up to the chapel. Strollers, baby joggers, skates and pets are not allowed on the race course. If you have any questions, please contact the gatehouse, Patrick Crowley at 202-543-0539.

**Volunteering:**  
We’re a cemetery; we have friends in high places. We’ll put in a good word for you if you volunteer on May 8th. We need volunteers for water stations, registration tables, parking guides, course monitors, clean-up crew, and the normal event managing tasks. You can sign up at volunteer@congressionalcemetery.org So when the Grim Reaper comes knocking at your door, you can tell him, “Hey Beelzebub, keep moving, I volunteered at Congressional!” Volunteers get a free race shirt and our dying gratitude.

**Sponsorship:**  
Sponsors are guaranteed entry into the seventh ring of Heaven (or was that some other ring?)  
As America’s first national cemetery, Congressional has an astounding story to tell. In fact, we have hundreds of great stories to tell. But we need your help: hundreds of fallen gravestones
need to be righted, educational programs are begging for support, 500 more trees planted, and 19th Century archives need to be sorted & preserved.

Join the effort to restore America’s first national cemetery, become a sponsor of the Dead Man’s Run to ensure that this treasury of American heritage will be passed on to the next generation. You can make a difference—Be American heritage!

WE OFFER FOUR LEVELS OF SPONSORSHIP:

**Patriot $20,000**
Patriot sponsor will share the title space of the Run in all media creation and distribution, in addition to the benefits of lower sponsorship levels.

**Founders $10,000**
Founder sponsors will be encouraged to set up a station along the start/finish line to educate the community about their organizations, in addition to the benefits of each lower sponsorship level.

**Builders $5,000**
Builder sponsors will have their entity’s logo imprinted on the race shirts and literature, be eligible to enter two 4-man teams in the Run, will receive VIP invitations to future APHCC events, in addition to the benefits of the lower sponsorship level.

**Statesmen $2,500**
Statesmen sponsors will have the name of their organization included on the race t-shirt and be invited to donate promotional items to a race ‘goodie bag.’
Anna Maria Thornton, Quiet at the Center of a Snow Storm

Anna Maria Thornton (R33/S41) is known for many things. She was the wife of the multi-talented William Thornton (R33/S40), who designed the Capitol Building. She was a society fixture of early Washington, bringing European sophistication to the new city. And she kept excellent diaries, which countless historians have used as a source for first-person descriptions of the building of the federal city, its burning by the British in 1814, and its subsequent rebuilding. Less well-known is Anna Thornton’s role in an 1835 race riot in Washington. The incident was called the Snow Storm, after Beverly Snow, a free black restaurateur who was particularly targeted by the mob. But the riot began as a reaction to something that happened to Anna Thornton. The history of the Snow Storm and its aftermath are the subject of Snow Storm in August, a new book by Jefferson Morley. When we invited Morley to attend the Cemetery Book Festival in August, he responded enthusiastically. “Anna Thornton’s moral courage is the beating heart of this book,” he wrote in an email. “Her heroism is described here for the first time.”

After William Thornton’s death in 1828, Anna shared their house on F street NW with her invalid mother and several slaves, including Maria Bowen and her son Arthur. Arthur occasionally attended meetings of John Cook’s talking society, an abolitionist group that met at the Union Seminary schoolhouse. On the night of August 4, 1835, a drunk Arthur Bowen entered the bedroom Maria, Anna, and Anna’s mother shared. He had an axe. The following excerpt from Morley’s book picks up the next morning.

Excerpt from Snow Storm in August (P.128)

“A dreadful night was last night, never to be forgotten,” Anna wrote in her diary the following day. She was sitting at the writing desk in the parlor. The weather outside was cloudy and cool with rain. She dipped her pen in the black ink.

“At ½ after one o’clock with an axe, with the intention, we suppose to murder us. His mother (Maria) sleeping in the rooms with us, & being fortunately awake, seized him & got him out, while I ran next door to alarm Dr. Huntt & got help – Oh what a horrid night.”

Anna did not leave the house all day, declining an invitation to attend a musical party in Kalorama. “I have no spirits for such parties now,” she said. Maria Bowen was even more miserable. Anna was grateful to her for shoving Arthur out of the room. At the same time, she pitied her for her child’s fate. Anna asked Maria if she could find out where Arthur had gone.

“It could save his life,” she said.

Maria knew something of Arthur’s favorite haunts: the race-track, the billiards room, the talking society. She probably knew John Cook, or knew of him. The Union Seminary schoolhouse was
located just two blocks away.

Heeding Anna’s advice, Maria set out to find her son.

To Anna’s way of thinking they had to sell Arthur as soon as possible to someone who would take him far away. She had never intended to sell him, but now she had no choice.

Eventually, Arthur Bowen was arrested, but not before a mob of disaffected whites stormed the streets of Washington, hoping to intimidate the black population and white abolitionists. They destroyed Beverly Snow’s restaurant, and called for the lynching of Arthur Bowen.

Anna Thornton was horrified.

The moral courage Morley referred to came first at Bowen’s trial, when Anna Thornton told the court, “I do not believe he had any malice towards me.”

When Bowen was convicted, she relentlessly pursued President Andrew Jackson until he finally granted Bowen a pardon. This brief excerpt and recap does not do the whole story justice. The history as detailed in the book includes Frances Scott Key.

By nineteenth century America, box tombs and chest tombs were recognized as horizontal ledger slabs supported above four corner posts with interior brick reinforcement. Generally ranging from two- to four-feet tall, these box-shaped burial markers typically do not contain the remains of the deceased but rather serve as markers for a burial or a family plot.

Douglas Keister, author of Stories in Stone: A Field Guide to Cemetery Symbolism and Iconography, believes the box tomb can be traced to the Greek sarcophagus. The actual translation of this word is “flesh-eater,” which is appropriate due to the acidic type of stone employed during ancient times in that area.

Throughout the centuries and with the transition from pyramids, cathedrals, and elaborate royal crypts to cemeteries, this type of interment has adapted to changing needs and tastes.

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Throughout the centuries and with the transition from pyramids, cathedrals, and elaborate royal crypts to cemeteries, this type of interment has adapted to changing needs and tastes.
When cemetery staff spotted an amphibian scaling a tree on the grounds, we couldn’t wait to find out what kind of tree frog had made Congressional its home. Barry Hayman, our grounds conservation manager, shot a video of the acrobatic animal, and we rushed the film to a local expert. The illustrious tree frog turned out to be an Eastern American toad (Anaxyrus americanus americanus). But, although it belongs to a common species, our toad—like many of our famous “residents”—has extraordinary talents.

“I’ve never seen one try to climb a tree,” said Andrew Landsman, a biological technician who serves as a county coordinator for the Maryland Amphibian and Reptile Atlas, which keeps track of Maryland amphibian populations. “I was surprised at how well it was doing that.”

True to its name, the Eastern American toad can be found throughout most of the eastern United States. All the toads need to settle down is a place with a body of water in the spring and early summer, so the females can lay their long strips of eggs.

And even non-climbing toads stand out in surprising ways. Toads feed on large amounts of agricultural pests, and this helps farms—and our cemetery garden—flourish. The humble toad has also contributed to scientific research. Most amphibians are considered bioindicators, which means they often serve as a “canary in a coal mine,” Landsman says. When amphibian populations suffer, there’s a good chance that other animals will be affected, as well. Scientists have studied toads, which are susceptible to chemicals and pesticides, to examine the toxicity of fragile environments, such as wetlands.

And, despite popular beliefs, the critters will not give humans warts. However, the toads may emit unpleasant secretions while being handled—which would leave a foul taste in a predator’s mouth. So, it may be best to admire them from afar. While the Eastern American toad is more ordinary than a tree frog, we’re proud such a dexterous member of the species has chosen to stay at Congressional.

To see a video of our tree climbing toad, visit our Facebook page.
Tickets Please!

BY LAUREN MALOY

These days it seems like you need a ticket for pretty much everything. From movie tickets and museum admission, to plane tickets and Metro passes, our daily lives (and incidentally, our wallets and purses) are filled with reminders of where we have been or where we want to go.

But tickets to a cemetery? Although decidedly less common today, popular cemeteries in the nineteenth century often issued tickets to owners of lots for entrance to the cemetery grounds.

Congressional Cemetery participated in this practice, and within the archives we have a few of these tickets dating to the 1870s.

Public interest in cemetery visitation reached new levels in the mid-nineteenth century. As Cathleen Breitkreutz notes in her developmental history of Congressional Cemetery, this increased attention can largely be attributed to the rural cemetery movement in America. The movement transformed cemeteries into destinations for those wishing to escape the city, and enjoy nature and monuments in a cemetery setting. Cemeteries such as Mount Auburn outside of Boston and Laurel Hill Cemetery in Philadelphia were specifically designed with this purpose in mind. Although Congressional was formed well before the movement began, it still benefited from the new perceptions of cemeteries that evolved during this period. Instead of being viewed solely as final resting places, cemeteries such as Congressional earned mention in tourist guidebooks and became gathering places for weekend outings.

In 1872, the vestry issued over one thousand tickets to owners of lots in the cemetery, which demonstrates just how popular Congressional was. Before the National Mall and other open spaces we take for granted in modern-day DC, cemeteries not only served as places to mourn, but as places to gather, reflect, and relax. These tickets are tangible proof that Congressional Cemetery has been viewed as a public space for well over a century, a tradition that continues to this day.

WHERE AM I?

Congressional Cemetery is full of easily recognizable images: Christian crosses, Masonic protractors, all manner of roses and lilies carved in stone. But do you recognize any of these icons? Check out www.congressionalcemetery.org for the answers.
Yes!
I want to help preserve and restore Congressional Cemetery with a tax deductible donation.

☐ $25  ☐ $50  ☐ $75  ☐ $100  ☐ $250  ☐ Other

2012 Membership: ☐ $125 Individual  ☐ $250 Family

☐ Check enclosed, made payable to Congressional Cemetery
☐ Please charge my credit card  ☐ Visa  ☐ Mastercard

Card # ________________________________
Cardmember Name ____________________ Exp ______
Signature _____________________________________________
Name _____________________________________________
Address _____________________________________________
City __________________ State ______ Zip ______
Phone/s _____________________________________________
Email _____________________________________________

☐ 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.

Calendar

SEPTEMBER 23
4pm Chamber Music Concert

OCTOBER 6
6pm Dead Man’s Run

OCTOBER 27
6pm Ghosts and Goblets Gala

NOVEMBER 6
John Philip Sousa’s Birthday

NOVEMBER 11
4pm Chamber Music Concert

Where do you see yourself in 100 years?

Reserve your place in American History
Congressional Cemetery is a non-denominational burial ground open to the whole community. Introducing burial niches next year. Traditional grave sites are available in a number of price ranges. Call today.
202-543-0539