

HERITAGE GAZETTE

SUMMER 2020

ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF
HISTORIC CONGRESSIONAL CEMETERY

CORONA VIRUS AND CONGRESSIONAL CEMETERY

COVID-19 has changed life for us all. While we adjust to the “new normal,” here at Congressional Cemetery, we have taken steps to keep things going, albeit a little differently.

VISIT VIRTUALLY

While we know it is not the same, we have done our best to put some content on the website to let you visit your favorite spots in Congressional Cemetery — online! We created a new page on our website that

allows you to explore with Google Street View, watch tours given by our docents, take a virtual tour with our satellite map, check out some 360 videos and download our self-guided tour brochures. Check out <https://congressionalcemetery.org/visit-virtually/> Hopefully, you can get your fix!

PHASE I REOPENING

With the lifting of the stay-at-home order in DC, we are instituting a phased re-opening. The Board, in conjunction with the K9 committee has decided to first open to members of the K9 Corps only, on staggered days based on tag numbers. To ensure that this occurs safely for everyone, HCC has hired two temporary, full-time gate checkers to make the Cemetery available from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

K9 Corps Tags 1 – 400: TUE, THU, SAT ONLY

K9 Corps Tags 401 – 860: WED, FRI, SUN ONLY

Members are asked to remain 6 feet apart, not gather in groups, and wear face-coverings at the entrance and exit. Face coverings are

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If you would like to schedule a burial or gravesite visit, you can reach us either by email: staff@congressionalcemetery.org or phone: (202) 543-0539.

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Faced with an extraordinary public health crisis, Historic Congressional Cemetery has spent the past several months ensuring that we continue to address our core mission: to preserve, promote, and protect our historic and active burial ground. In this special edition of the HCC newsletter, we, the team at HCC, hope to convey to you how we have worked to accomplish those goals in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.



First and foremost, I want to take the opportunity to thank and recognize the many different constituencies of HCC for your patience, understanding, and support as we have adapted to the challenges of our time. Over the past several months, the staff and Board of the Association for the Preservation of Historic Congressional Cemetery has taken great care to consider the needs of our different communities while keeping safety as our top priority in making the decisions first to close and now to implement a phased re-opening of the Cemetery.

For those with loved ones buried here, we were able to have extra hours on Mother's Day and Memorial Day for families and friends to come and lay flowers. Even with the Gatehouse closed for the foreseeable future, gravesite visits remain available by appointment. Just give the office a call at (202) 543-0539 to set up a time and make sure someone is on-site to welcome family members.

With more than 800 dogs from across the area, the K9 Corps is one of the largest groups making use of the Cemetery and one of our biggest and most important constituencies. As a former dogwalker with a family member buried at HCC, I value both aspects of the unique combination that defines HCC to so many.

The K9 Corps has long been and remains one of the most important sources of revenue to help maintain the grounds. For example, did you know that it costs \$125,000 a year just to keep the grass mowed? Before the K9 Corps was created and dog walkers came into our lives at HCC, the Cemetery was in a state of tremendous disrepair.

When we think of the K9 Corps and our dog walking community, we see more than just a big dog park; we see a connected community committed to the sustainability of our Cemetery. We were eager to work with the K9 Committee to prioritize the return of the K9 Corps to the Cemetery as quickly and safely as possible once Mayor Bowser began reopening DC. While we are not completely back to business as usual, we are now able to safely welcome our canine friends and family through a plan of staggered use.

We are also mindful of the many K9 Corps Waiting List members who have patiently waited for their opportunity to join the K9 Corps and who

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THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRESERVATION
OF HISTORIC CONGRESSIONAL CEMETERY

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Washington, DC 20003

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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

It certainly has been an interesting few months to run a cemetery. It was heartbreaking to have to close the Cemetery on March 24 to our beloved dog walkers, general public, and even staff. We assume it's the first time in 216 years that the cemetery gates were closed for an undetermined amount of time.

Rest assured that the Cemetery grounds are still being mowed every day by our contractor Brightview, deemed an essential business for sanitary purposes and pest control. Our two groundskeepers come in on a limited bases, rotating days onsite, and our Front Office manager visits on a limited basis to collect mail, retrieve phone messages, and unlock the gate for a small number of family members who have scheduled a visit. While we have had several funerals while closed, we are not yet hosting an uptick of funerals, but are now adapting to live streaming, limiting the number of attendees, length, and staff required at each and every service, all wearing masks of course.

I myself live directly across the street — about fifty feet away from the side gate. It was either the best or worse decision I have ever made. In this case, I can visit the office and roam the grounds alone during the District of Columbia's mandatory stay-at-home order. It's certainly eerie to know you are the only person on the 35-acre grounds, but it is important for assuring that our stewardship of the grounds and of those interred here are continuing during these unprecedented times.

My husband and our two cats have been doing our best at self-isolating and making safe runs to the grocery and liquor stores — and supporting our local favorite restaurants now offering curbside pickup or delivery. We've also generously rewarded our favorite servers that now oddly show up at our personal residence often to our mutual amusement.

With the stay-at-home order continuing until at least June 8 in the District, we are now at least able to visit and stay aboard our large sailboat which we have



docked in Baltimore, just 35 miles away. It's a welcome change of view from our two room (room — not bedroom!) apartment in Washington, where my husband works from home and is 'happy' to have me go to work on a more normal day. Being on the water and boat distancing from our many friends on the J dock at the Baltimore Marine Center is a welcome break from the daily news.

Cemetery staff connect every Tuesday via Zoom to discuss business, moving various events to an already crowded fall, grounds needs, and ongoing projects that were contracted before the virus impacted everything we do. It's not a replacement for our lively lunchtime discussions and jovial banter, but it works for now. I'm continually impressed with their creativity and how they have adapted to a stay at home requirement.

—Paul K. Williams, President

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

COVID *continued from page 1*

strongly recommended elsewhere in the Cemetery. We anxiously look forward to a time when we can safely welcome and accommodate public access to Historic Congressional Cemetery.

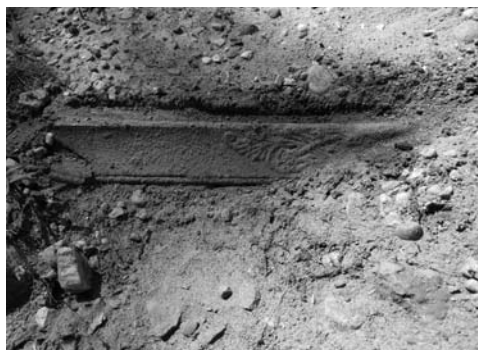
BURIALS

HCC is currently open to imminent funerals with advanced scheduling.

GRAVESITE VISITS

Through the closure, we arranged for families to visit their loved one's gravesites by appointment. Our wonderful team makes themselves available at the office to allow those to enter the gates for these visits. The visits provide our community the opportunity to come together in unity and solidarity, in addition to providing those who have had recent deaths or burials of family members to grieve properly by visiting their loved one's gravesites. We welcome those family members to come in at their convenience to do so and are honored to be able to provide this service during the COVID-19 pandemic.

HISTORY MYSTERY!



After a recent heavy rain, staff noticed a decorative piece of metal exposed along one of our dirt paths. It was definitely attached to something underground, but we wondered what it was. Can you guess? Answer on page 11

PRE-NEED SITE SALES

Our office is responding to calls and emails regarding site sale purchases at this time. Zoom appointment site sales are available on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. We are sending out our Site Sale packets via email, which includes pricing, available site locations, etc. Deposits can be made remotely via credit/debit card/check if a site would like to be purchased.

LIFE IN THE "OFFICE"

Adjusting life through the COVID-19 pandemic has been an obstacle. Like everyone else, Kimberly Marcus, Front Office Manager, has had to adjust her daily routine when it comes to managing family, work, and social life. Over time, she has managed to balance each with a bit of compromise and patience. Adjusting from being a working mom to a stay-at-home mom has been the most difficult. Kim says "Trying to maintain my work and my son's distance learning and assignments have been quite the adjustment. Trying to maintain the two, has been very stressful but I maintained through developing daily schedules and creating routines to stay on top of both." Her time has been filled with checking phone messages regularly, responding to email inquiries, stopping by the gatehouse to make sure everything stays in order and coordinating family visits from a distance as well as assist our community with all inquiries regarding K9 memberships, events, etc.

POSTPONED BUT NOT CANCELLED

For programs and specials events, we have made some adaptations and adjustments, based on CDC recommendations. For our big events, we have shifted them to the fall, so those of you that love Goat Yoga (September 26 & 27) and the Day of the Dog Festival (October 31), have no fear — they will take place later in the year — when it will be safe to gather once again. And Soul Strolls will still go on, it just might look a little bit different!

CORONA VIRUS AND CONGRESSIONAL

Guided docent tours were cancelled for the month of April but came back in a new format for the month of May. Docents gave Facebook Live tours for the regularly scheduled Saturday at 11am and Sunday at 1pm tours of the Cemetery. Visitors were able to join in real time, even asking questions through the comment feature and having them answered on camera. If you are not into Facebook, the videos are posted on the Congressional Cemetery's YouTube page. If you are not into YouTube, the playlist can also be found on the Visit Virtually page of the website.

Take a look at the calendar on p. 16 for a complete list of program and event dates.

CONSERVATION IN QUARANTINE

BY MARGARET CANILANG

Well, that escalated quickly! On a Friday, my husband and I were trying to decide if we should follow through with that weekend's plans to visit family in New York City, and by the following Tuesday, we were hunkered down at home and teleworking while juggling the needs of our teething 5-month-old. Within the first day, it was clear this new normal would be a major adjustment.

With daycare only open to essential workers, my spring conservation plans look much different than expected. My goal for 2020 is to conserve the approximately 550 markers in one of the oldest sections of the cemetery — cleaning, resetting, iron pin removal, new foundations, mortar repair, etc. This is an efficient way to tackle gravestone repairs and ultimately results in a significant visual improvement. Since our son has not been trained to assist me with the gantry, my focus has been on preparation and organization of the section's repairs so that I can jump straight back into work when life returns to normal.

My quarantine tasks have included:

- Assessments to determine the needs of each gravestone
- Tracking necessary repairs in a spreadsheet
- Reviewing gravestone repairs best practices

- Creating quick-review sheets for supplies needed and a procedure for each treatment
- Estimating supplies needed to complete the repairs
- Developing a procedure to tackle the repairs as efficiently as possible
- Setting up a digital assessment form that will link to our GIS map

We will be using Collector, a Geographic Information System app, to record repair needs and completed treatments while out on the cemetery grounds without having to return to an office computer to enter the information.

In addition to this preparation, I have been reviewing summer intern applications and am happy to welcome two interns to Congressional this summer to help accomplish our 2020 conservation goal.

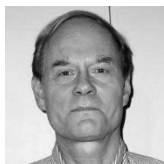
Despite most quarantine days presenting a challenging balance between work duties and motherhood, the stay-at-home order has given me a chance to adequately prepare for a full summer of stone conservation while also experiencing many of my son's "firsts."



MEET THE NEW BOARD MEMBERS!



Heather Alarcon has provided in-house legal counsel to the Association of American Medical Colleges since 2011. In addition to her focus on employment law and nonprofit law, Ms. Alarcon is a nationally-recognized expert in standardized testing law, and has received Kat Turner Spirit of Excellence Awards for her work in disability accommodations on the MCAT exam and medical school application processes. Ms. Alarcon has represented the voice of health professional education through the submission of Amicus briefs led by the AAMC in cases such as *Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin* (I and II) and the recent DACA case (*Regents of University of California v. DHS*). Prior to joining the AAMC, Ms. Alarcon served as in-house legal counsel to the Corporation for National and Community Service and the AmeriCorps program for 6 years. Ms. Alarcon began her career as a Presidential Management Fellow working in Equal Opportunity, Diversity, and Inclusion. Ms. Alarcon is an alumna of the University of Virginia (BA in English, History) and the College of William and Mary (JD), and is licensed to practice law in Virginia and the District of Columbia. Ms. Alarcon lives on Capitol Hill with her husband, three small children, and black lab/spaniel mix, Molly. She has been a member of Congressional Cemetery since 2012, a plot owner and a member of the K9 Committee since 2014.



Born and raised in Syracuse, NY, **Larry J. West** is a 19th century photo-historian, collector and exhibitor. He is focused on early photographers, the Underground Railroad, and vintage photo-jewelry. Mr. West has a bachelor's degree in Chemistry & Business from the University of Arkansas which he used at the beginning of his career, especially at IBM (Endicott Research Labs). He earned an MBA in Marketing, State University of NY at Albany from the

Graduate School of Business and attended graduate courses in Finance at New York University, NYC. His career includes a position as the VP of Direct & Web Marketing at Tiffany & Co. and then his own Mergers & Acquisitions company as a deal-maker. He retired a few years ago and eventually moved, with his partner, Diana King, to DC, to be in the middle of unfolding American history and to be better positioned to collect, research, write and create institutional exhibitions on 19th century history and culture. HCC is now an active part of his and Diana's weekly life. They adopted the seven plots of the Handy Family, which includes the grave of Mathew Brady and Levin Handy, and they are trying to be stronger and nimbler than the grass and weeds. Soon he will be adding a vintage, large camera lens to the plot center [so watch for it!]. He holds two plots near Brady's and will someday erect a fitting memorial to one of America's most important Fathers of photography...and great entrepreneurs.



Nat Wyeth currently serves as Director of Development for the SEED School of Washington, DC — a public charter boarding school located in Ward 7. Prior to joining SEED, Nat spent 9 years working as a major gift officer for Washington National Cathedral where he remains a member of the congregation. He and his wife Anna live in the Edgewood neighborhood with their 11 month old son, Robbie. Anna works as the Director of Alumni Engagement at the Sidwell Friends School.

Nat grew up in Towson, Maryland and graduated from Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee with a degree in Political Science. Nat has a deep family history in the city as his great-grandfather Nathan C. Wyeth served as the District's Municipal Architect from 1934-1946. Nathan designed many municipal buildings, private residences and embassies during his career. Nat and Anna enjoy exploring their growing neighborhood which borders another historic cemetery, Glenwood.

THE THEOPHILUS HOWARD FAMILY: MARKING A STOP ON THE AFRICAN- AMERICAN WALKING TOUR

An article about the Howard family in last summer's *Heritage Gazette* hinted at some intriguing connections to the Cemetery and the broader Capitol Hill community:

- Theophilus Howard was the sexton of Christ Church Washington Parish (the owner of Congressional Cemetery) from about 1858 to 1865.
- He was married to Diana Ball by the Rev. Henry H. Bean, rector of Christ Church, on May 14, 1846. The handwritten record of their marriage in parish archives notes that the couple was “colored.”
- Diana received her freedom papers one month before they were married. She had been enslaved in the household of Archibald Henderson, the longest serving Commandant of the Marine Corps, who is buried at Congressional Cemetery.
- Mr. Howard owned a parcel of land on Capitol Hill, in the 600 block of B St. (now Independence Avenue). The land was sold to him for \$1 by Martha McKnight, the daughter of William Prout, who gave the original plot of land for Christ Church and is buried at HCC.
- Mr. Howard was drafted by the Union Army dur-

ing the Civil War (1864) and was assigned to work at the Navy Yard during his period of conscription.

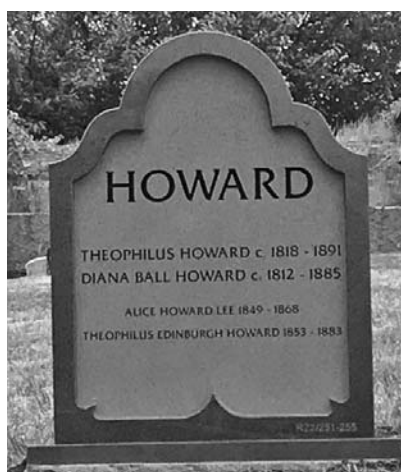
- He bought 5 burial sites in Congressional Cemetery in 1868 when his 19-year-old daughter Alice died. Alice had been married only four months earlier, by rector Mark L. Olds at Christ Church.
- Theophilus Howard made his will after his wife, his daughter, and his son Theophilus Howard, Jr., had died. He left his estate to his four grandchildren, “with the proviso that if any become drunkards or gamblers or pursue an immoral life the proceeds of the estate shall be shared only by those who do not violate the moral law.”

Last summer's article noted that Theophilus Howard, his wife Diana, and 9 other family members were buried in unmarked graves. As far as can be determined, the last descendants of Theophilus Howard were his grandchildren; no family members are alive to tell the story of Theophilus and Diana, their children and grandchildren.

That caught the attention of a group of parishioners at Christ Church, who began exploring the Howard family history with the help of Catherine Ball, a DC-based genealogist. Christ Church is celebrating the 225th anniversary of its founding this year and decided to raise funds for a Howard Family

memorial as part of that celebration. Beginning with seed money from the parish budget and a grant from the Capitol Hill Community Foundation, the church reached out for contributions from individuals and raised enough money for a family gravestone for the Howards.

The stone was installed in May marking the burial sites of the Howards on the knoll overlooking what is known as the “doggy day spa” at the intersection of Prout and Henderson Streets. Watch the Congressional Cemetery Facebook page for plans to dedicate the gravestone later this year.



Monument for the Howard Family, installed May 2020



Photos by engraver of the stone, Kuma

THE CONNECTION PROJECT

As you may have noticed, Joel Samuels, our Board Chair has used his section of the newsletter to share stories about what makes HCC special to him. He has done so in the hopes of inspiring all of you who are connected to Congressional to consider the ways in which this amazing place is special to you. Since joining the Board of HCC, he has been struck by the depth of the connection that each Board member feels to our Cemetery and that connection extends beyond the board to our whole Congressional Cemetery community.

We are starting to collect those stories and we want to hear YOURS! Congressional Cemetery is a special place to us. We hear stories all the time of connections people have with the Cemetery. Some are typical and others are more non-traditional. Some people have one big reason they love the Cemetery and others have a bunch of little reasons. We would love to hear what makes Congressional Cemetery special to you.

You can visit <https://congressionalcemetery/connection-project> to start the process. From there, you can fill out a simple online form, download a document to work on at your own pace, or print it out and deliver it to the gatehouse. We want to make this as easy as possible to share your connections with us. The questions include:

What makes Congressional Cemetery special to you?

Why do you visit Congressional Cemetery?

What is your favorite spot at Congressional Cemetery?

What is your first memory of Congressional Cemetery?

Do you have any other stories or memories that you would like to share?

Share your story (or stories) with us. You can share as many or as few stories as you like. These writing prompts are just to help get your creative juices flowing. Tell us the ways that you love Congressional

Cemetery. Use as many words as you need. We want to know what brings you to us. Do you bring your dog every single day? Do you come to remember a loved one buried with us on a special day each year? Or perhaps you just love the peaceful atmosphere. What brings you through our gates? We want to know if there is one particular place to which you are drawn when you visit. This place could have special meaning for you. Or it might just be a place you find to be restful. This could be a loved one's final resting place or the place where you met the love of your life. We want to highlight these special places and what they mean to you. One way, or another, you made it to us and we want to know what brought you to us! Now is your chance to share any other stories that you may have or ways that you are connected to Congressional Cemetery. Many people have multiple connections, so don't be shy.

Once we have started to collect the stories, we plan to share them in a variety of ways. We will share some in the newsletter and on social media, we also plan to grow this project potentially into an exhibit and a special walking tour.

CEMETERY FINANCIALS & NEED FOR DONATIONS



H Street Gate on 17th Street

AROUND THE GATEHOUSE

Over the course of eight years, the Cemetery has been creative in introducing new revenue streams that have allowed both the expansion of staffing and of cash reserves. We are fortunate to have obtained a PPP loan to bridge the gap and keep all staff employed. Our revenue generating spring events, however, have been canceled or (hopefully) moved to new dates in the fall. New site sales have plummeted during the stay-at-home order imposed in the District.

Believe it or not, our donation box and dog walking day passes used to generate nearly \$1,000 a week and that revenue has not taken place for two months and counting. Many chapel and grounds rentals have been canceled, and deposits returned. Did you ever imagine just how many weddings and birthday parties that are booked in the middle of a cemetery? Quite a few, it turns out. The canceled major spring events that included Goat Yoga, Pride 5K, and Day of the Dog were expected to have brought in \$30,000 alone.

Yet projects underway have had to continue, from mowing the lawn (\$120,000 yearly), a critical new (and temporary) retaining wall to avoid exposed graves (\$7,000), continuation of the Hamilton family vault restoration and the installation of our new columbarium, contracted in 2019.

There are many ways to donate and support Con-

gressional Cemetery during these unusual times, and we need your help. Please consider a onetime donation by check or on our website or a donation of stock that might benefit yourself as advised by your tax consultant.



GREEN BURIAL AND THE DEATH POSITIVE DC PODCAST

Congressional Cemetery President Paul Williams was featured on two different podcasts by Sarah Farr, the founder of the Death Positive movement in Washington, DC. His focus was on green burials that are allowed at Congressional, one of the few cemeteries in the metropolitan region that allow the rapidly popular practice. Williams provided visuals and began with a brief history of the grounds, highlighted some of the famous people buried there, and delved into the many different types of green burials that the cemetery has provided over the past eight years.

Congressional Cemetery is a certified hybrid green cemetery by the national Green Burial Council. That means they can provide a more traditional burial with cement liner and metal casket, or just the opposite — no embalming, a wicker or bamboo casket or just a cotton shroud. They jokingly call that the “clothing optional” service.



Hamilton-Watterson Vault project

AROUND THE GATEHOUSE

Unlike many cemeteries, Congressional Cemetery has never mandated a concrete vault that a traditional casket is placed into and then sealed with a concrete lid. Many people assume embalming is legally required, but in most States it is not. Biodegradable caskets are an integral part of any green burial, and they can consist of a plain pine box joined with wooden pegs, wicker, bamboo, cardboard, or even papier Mache created from used newspapers and plaster of Paris.

Williams explained that green burials tend to be much more personable than the traditional burial, with mourners frequently joining together to shovel the entire grave by hand, a grieving process that takes an hour or more. An array of wildflowers is usually the substitute for roses and other varieties flown in from other countries. The site can be marked by a natural boulder that is inscribed with the person's name, dates, or even a nice quote.

Williams entertained myriad questions from viewers during the second half of the hour long podcast where he was asked how many funerals are performed each year (75), what plots cost (starting at \$4,500), and even what his favorite headstone is (Librarian Thomas Mann, who is still very much alive – his headstone is shaped and reads like an old fashioned Dewey Decimal index card from a card catalog, complete with the tiny hole for the security rod).

Sarah Farr created Death Positive DC in May of 2017 to promote conversations about death and help people connect around this topic through social media and in-person events in and around Washington, DC. Death Positive DC is the first organized death positive group in DC and the surrounding areas covering DC, Northern VA, and parts of Maryland near DC.

For more information visit:

www.DeathPositiveDC.com

Instagram & Twitter @deathpositivedc

Events: www.deathpositivedc.com/death-cafes-events

PAYCHECK PROTECTION PROGRAM LOAN

Sometimes it literally pays to work with a local bank, in our case the National Capitol Bank of Washington, DC. It is still owned by members of the Didden family who were also instrumental in the founding of the Association for the Preservation of Congressional Cemetery in 1976.

Congressional Cemetery President Paul Williams immediately convened the Board for a special meeting via Zoom to approve the application for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan.

Although the program directives are in constant motion, the total amount of the PPP loan requested was determined by the average salary of all nine employees for two months during the prior fiscal year, plus 15% to be applied for utilities. The intent of the program, and a strict loan requirement, is that the cemetery maintains the current staff level for at least two months in order to have the loan eventually forgiven. After a few nervous weeks, the bank approved our loan in the amount of \$84,121, and the funds were deposited in a restricted, independent bank account to be carefully distributed for salary and utilities. It is a nice assurance to the dedicated employees that will continue to receive a paycheck and not be furloughed while the Cemetery office and grounds are closed to the staff and public.

HCC VIRTUAL ANNUAL MEETING

Congressional Cemetery hosted the Association for the Preservation of Historic Congressional Cemetery's Annual Meeting on April 18 via Zoom. President Paul K. Williams presented the annual report, sharing the highlights of the past year. One attendee responded, "Thank you! Excellent report and meeting!"

MOTHER'S DAY

Mother's Day is a special occasion for family and friends to celebrate those that gave the gift of life to their children. We value and appreciate all that comes with motherhood and the sacrifices, nurturing, and

AROUND THE GATEHOUSE

love provided by such phenomenal moms! We opened the cemetery on Mother's Day, May 10 to allow loved ones to place flowers on gravesites to acknowledge and honor the extraordinary mothers who are interred at our cemetery. The visits were made by appointment only and members of our team monitored all those that came out to ensure social distancing. Entrance was allowed only to those who came bearing flowers in hand. We had a great turnout and are pleased to have been able to open the gates for such a commemorative occasion during the COVID-19 pandemic to provide a bit of normalcy in these times.

CALLING ALL FORMER APHCC BOARD MEMBERS

We are making an effort to better stay in touch with our former APHCC Board members. We have done our best to track down the addresses and contact information for former board members, going all the

way back to 1976! A lot has changed since then, people have left the area or moved on, and we do not always get new contact information. If you or someone you know has participated on the Board and did NOT receive an invitation to the HCC Board Reunion for March, please contact the office to give us your updated contact information. 🌿



HISTORY MYSTERY ANSWER

It is a large piece of an old cast iron radiator.

Now the question is how and why that ended up in the middle of a cemetery.

FROM THE CHAIR *continued from page 2*

often take advantage of our day pass program to bring their dogs onto our grounds. While the first phase of our reopening could not accommodate that important constituency, we are planning to create opportunities for you, too, as the phased reopening continues.

To our neighbors on Capitol Hill – those who love to visit and spend time in HCC, we know you are as eager to get back as we are to have you back. When the pandemic first began, we had an average of 300 people through the gate each hour, which gives us an idea of how many people love to visit our grounds. However, while we do have plenty of space in the Cemetery, entry and exit points are limited and enforcing social distancing is difficult. For that reason, we are working on a plan to slowly reopen, a little at a time, so we can ensure the health and wellbeing of those who wish to visit —safely.

To offer continued engagement and thanks to the efforts of our extraordinary staff and docents, we have

been able to host weekly tours of the Cemetery on Facebook Live, with those videos available for viewing anytime on our website.

The safety of our community is of paramount importance. As we slowly re-open, we will continue taking graduated measures ensure the security and welfare of our friends, neighbors, staff, and historic property.

We look forward to a time when we can open once again to one and all and can continue where we left off, creating new memories, and forging new connections to this place we all hold dear. In the meantime, please continue following our progress on our website, through our Facebook Live tours, and consider participating in our new initiative, *The Connection Project*, detailed in the article on page 8, for those who love and are linked to Congressional to share their HCC stories.

Thank you, once again, for your patience and understanding as we navigate these unprecedented circumstances and as we work to make HCC accessible to as many people as possible, with safety as our paramount concern, one step at a time. 🌿

SICKNESS UNTO DEATH

BY CHARLES WALTON

Almost every cemetery that is over 100 years old will have a number of gravestones bearing dates of death as 1918 or 1919, often grouped together as we see in the “Babyland” section of Congressional Cemetery. Certainly not all deaths in those years were caused by the Spanish Influenza, but often newspaper articles and obituaries from the period will provide that information. If the person was young, between 20 and 45 years old, there is a good chance that the cause of death was the Spanish Influenza, which targeted those in that age group. It is estimated that the young accounted for 44% of deaths from the influenza. Such is the case of Grayson Coffman [R87/S270] who was the fourth reported victim of the influenza in the District. According to his obituary, published in the Evening Star on September 26, 1918, he was 20 years old and the beloved son of W.B. and Minnie Coffman. His stone, small and difficult to find, is near the Arsenal Monument.

Until the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Spanish Influenza Epidemic was called the “Forgotten Epidemic.” It infected 500,000,000 world-wide, killing between 20-50 million, perhaps more. Some estimates are that 3% of the world population perished. About 700,000 of those deaths occurred in the United States, equaling the number of lives lost during the AIDS Epidemic of the 1980s and 1990s. What we are seeing today in many ways resembles the response by governments, national and local, 100 years ago: closing of businesses, schools, and churches; quarantines; wearing of face masks. As today, travel helped to create the conditions for the spread of the virus. The rapid buildup of the military required establishment of military camps, crammed with troops destined for Europe, providing the ideal conditions in which the influenza thrived.

As today, doctors and nurses were on the front lines, heroes in the fight against a deadly foe. Medical students were released from studies or graduated early, and calls went forth for nurses. The Army’s call in 1918 for nurses resulted in 20,000 volunteers who cared for soldiers wounded and suffering from influenza. Among those nurses was Amelia Elisa Linn (1882-1969) [R61/S298], already an experienced and seasoned nurse. Originally from Illinois, she graduated from nursing school in St. Louis, and came to Washington, DC. Among her assignments with the Army was Camp Meade (now Fort Meade), which like many military camps was hard hit by the Influenza. She is buried in Congressional Cemetery, her grave marked by a government-issued stone. Like many of the military medical personnel at the time, she served both the military and civilian stricken. An historical footnote here is that the Army Nurse Corps, which was established in 1901, was gender-specific and limited to females. Although the Army had male nurses (at least seven were serving in France in 1918) with the same training as their female counterparts, they were considered orderlies and paid at half the rate of female nurses.

Spanish Influenza, of course, was not the only epidemic to affect the world, the United States, and Washington in particular. A local forgotten epidemic occurred at the National Hotel. Located on the northeastern corner of Pennsylvania Ave and 6th Street, NW (the site of the former Newseum), it was built by John Gadsby and opened in 1827. At the time, it was considered the finest hotel in Washington and included many illustrious and infamous as its guests, including Presidents Jackson, Polk and Lincoln. Henry Clay was a resident in the hotel for many years and died




Demonstration at the Red Cross Emergency Ambulance Station in Washington, D.C., during the influenza pandemic of 1918

there in his room (116); he has a cenotaph at Congressional. John Wilkes Booth stayed at the National in room 228 while planning his assassination of President of Lincoln. Solomon Northrup, a Free African-American and abolitionist from New York, was kidnapped at the National Hotel in 1841 and sold into slavery, regaining his freedom on January 4, 1853. His memoir is *12 Years a Slave*.

In early 1857, President-elect James Buchanan and 400 guests staying at the hotel became ill from a gastro-intestinal ailment now referred to as the “National Hotel Disease” that killed 3 dozen or so. Although conspiracy theories abounded that abolitionists had tried to poison Buchanan, the likely suspect was cholera, due to the sudden appearance of diarrhea and nausea and the fact that there was an open sewer at one corner of the hotel, emitting foul odors. It could also have been dysentery or typhoid fever. Physicians at the time subscribed to the disease-etiology of “miasmas.”

Among the victims of the National Hotel Disease were two Congressmen, a former Congressman, and President Buchanan’s nephew, Elliott Eskridge Lane who was 34 years of age. Both Congressmen have cenotaphs at Congressional. John Gallagher Montgomery (1805-1857) of Pennsylvania had a brief career in Congress, dying on April 24, 1857. John Anthony Quitman (1798-1858) served in the Mexican-American War, commanding a brigade under Zachary Taylor and later served as governor of Mississippi. He died at his home in Mississippi from the lasting effects of the National Hotel Disease on July 17, 1858 and is buried in Natchez.

Perhaps a lesson to be taken from reading about past epidemics and pandemics is one of hope: that those signs we now see about being in this pandemic together and that we will get through it are true. History also teaches us that there almost certainly will be another. 

HAMILTON/WATTERSTON VAULT

One of our favorite contractors, Devlin McDonald with DMC Masonry Restoration, is taking advantage of the grounds being closed to dogs by getting a jump start on the restoration of the Charles Hamilton and George Watterston burial vault.

Devlin will be removing the sod from the barrel vault and cleaning the entire structure, which looks out over the East End of the cemetery. The most difficult parts of the job will include stabilizing the columns and capstone pieces which will likely involve dismantling and rebuilding while maintaining the thin butter joints of the mortar between the bricks, a character-defining feature of the Hamilton Vault. In order to maintain the same profile of the columns, Devlin will be labeling each brick and creating a key to make sure each brick returns to its original placement in the column. After painstakingly removing all the failed mortar and Portland cement from the barrel vault, Devlin will repoint the mortar joints, install a 3-coat plaster system, and finish with a protective yet breathable potassium silicate coating.

Snapped from its hinges long ago, the iron door had corroded past the point of repair. Flaherty Iron Works of Alexandria, Virginia is currently producing a replacement that will hang from the original hinges. The Hamilton/Watterston vault has patiently waited in the queue as other vaults and mausoleums around it took priority, but it is finally time to shine! ...Or at least finally have an intact front façade. 🐾



1972



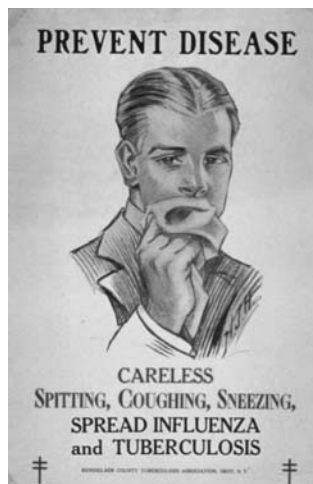
2020

TUBERCULOSIS – THEN AND NOW

BY DAYLE DOOLEY

When I first started to research tuberculosis (TB) deaths in Congressional Cemetery, I thought I would find it was a disease of the past. Getting TB in 1900 was a death sentence. The disease attacks the lungs and the average sufferer lived three years. It killed 194 people per 100,000 and was the second leading cause of death in the US. In 1900 Congressional Cemetery buried 552 people, 64 of those people (or 12%) the stated cause of death was from tuberculosis/consumption/pneumonia. With diagnostics in their infancy this terminology could be interchangeable. To put this into perspective, in 1940 we buried 8 people diagnosed with TB; in 1950 only two.

By 1907, Christmas Seals were first sold in US Post Offices and later through direct mail. Proceeds supported sanatoriums for the treatment of tuberculosis. With the advent of effective therapy in the mid-1950s, sanatoriums began to become superfluous. By the mid-1960s most were closed. Hospital care was no longer required to provide treatment because patients receiving effective drug treatment quickly became noninfectious. In 2017, there were 9,093 reported case of TB in the US with 515 deaths. Even today treatment can take up to 9 months. While unexpected, tuberculosis in the U.S. has NOT been eliminated. Control of TB is currently based on three strategies: case finding and treatment of active disease; treatment of latent TB infection; and vaccination with Bacille Calmette-Guérin (BCG). Although tuberculosis is both preventable and curable, more than 10 million people worldwide developed active tuberculosis disease in 2019. An estimated 4,000 people die from the disease each day. As countries across the world grapple with



Christmas Seals Campaign, 1919, Library of Congress LC-DIG-ppmsca-43170



Tuberculosis poster, 1935, Library of Congress LC-USZC2-5369

the COVID-19 pandemic, the United Nations Health agency reminded everyone on World Tuberculosis Day 2020 (March 24) that TB remains the world's most deadly infection disease. Tuberculosis and COVID-19 are both pandemics that show ongoing, sustained community transmission across continents. No country is tuberculosis-free. These two pandemics, one old and one new, remind us of the need to be proactive and long-sighted, to plan ahead, and to not become complacent. ☞

SOURCES:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <https://www.cdc.gov/tb/statistics/default.htm>
- Davennie, Tamara & Helen McShane (2016) Why don't we have an effective tuberculosis vaccine yet?, *Expert Review of Vaccines*, 15:8, 1009-1013, DOI: 10.1586/14760584.2016.1170599
- Golub, J.E., C.I. Mohan, G.W. Comstock & R.E. Chaisson (2005) Active case finding of tuberculosis: historical perspective and future prospects [Review article], *The International Journal of Tuberculosis and Lung Disease*, 9:11, 1183-1203.
- World Health Organization, World Tuberculosis Day 2020, <https://www.who.int/news-room/campaigns/world-tb-day/world-tb-day-2020>

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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| September 26 | Community Yard Sale |
| | Goat Yoga |
| September 27 | Goat Yoga |
| October 3 | Dead Man's Run 5K |
| October 10 | Pride 5K |
| October 16 & 17 | Soul Strolls: Twilight Tours |
| October 23 & 24 | Soul Strolls: Candlelit Tours |
| October 31 | Day of the Dog Festival |



(Weird Al 2009-)

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