
IVY HILL CEMETERY

HISTORICAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Dedicated to the preservation of monuments, promotion of history, and protection of flora and fauna of Ivy Hill Cemetery

www.ihchps.org

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NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2010

The Cemetery in the Snow

Storm of the century is beast as well as beauty



Mother Nature misplaced the weather map this year and deposited more snow in Alexandria than in any other winter on record. Ivy Hill Cemetery, like its neighbors, was inundated with the white stuff. Everyone knows first hand the difficulties we all shared: impossible driving

conditions, challenging walking routes, and homes and property weighed down with ice and snow. But there were additional challenges faced by Ivy Hill beyond the usual ones. There are issues unique to keeping 23 wooded acres accessible and protected. (con't p.2)

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From the President:

Snow Etiquette by
Tom Bowling, President
of Ivy Hill Cemetery

Beneath The Oaks, II
now available

Featured Fauna & Flora:
Cardinal & Red Cedar

Featured Resident: Simonne
Jeanne Michenon

MOTHERS' DAY PICNIC AT IVY HILL CEMETERY

SUNDAY, MAY 9, 2010

There must be a promise of spring after all the storms. On Mothers' Day, May 9, the Historical Preservation Society will revive an old tradition and host a picnic at the cemetery in honor of all Mothers and to celebrate the coming of spring and renewal.



Be sure to mark your calendars, pack your picnic lunch, and come out to join us starting at 1:00 p.m. on Mothers' Day. Celebrate Motherhood and enjoy neighborhood friends and family while visiting the cemetery. Tours will begin at 2:00 p.m.



Sidewalks cleared early and often made Ivy Hill a great neighbor for walkers.

The Sidewalk Challenge

Ivy Hill President Tom Bowling and his staff started snow removal early and often as the storm geared up. They plowed through the night during the first storm and provided walkers on King Street with some of the first cleared sidewalk in town (812 feet of it!). More than one neighbor stopped to say, "Thanks!"

Creative Equipment

Unfortunately, it just kept snowing ... and snowing. The results: first, each of the two snow blowers gave out on the same day, followed by a snow plow breaking off its mounting. The snow blowers were goners, and the next round of re-shoveling the King Street sidewalks was done with strong backs and able hands.

Later staff had to stand on the sidewalk to ensure city plows would not re-cover their work!

Repairs were made to the plow and clearing the cemetery roads began again despite repeated breakdown of overtaxed equipment. Creative thinking even resulted in using a mini excavator to move snow.

Interments Delayed

The first interments since the storms were able to take place on February 25. In times gone by, the vault was used as a temporary resting place in winter months when the ground was frozen.

Results

As the snow melts, the cemetery recovers, assesses damage, and prepares to repair.

MOTHER NATURE'S VANDALISM

STONE JOINT SEPARATION is a potential hazard for grave stones after big storms with prolonged freeze-thaw cycles.

1. Many grave stones are comprised of stone segments, different pieces of stone, joined with a compound similar to caulking.

3. A small crack in an older soft marble stone may fill with water which turns into ice and breaks the stone.



Our friend the owl is not the culprit here. She is keeping a watchful eye on the possible effects nature may have on older grave stones after the storms. (More about the owl in upcoming issues.)

2. If water manages to seep into the airtight joint between the stone pieces due to extended periods under water or ice, the resulting pressure may be enough to lift one stone off of the piece on which it sits.

4. IHCHPS support is needed to sponsor repairs to older grave stones no longer cared for by families.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

SNOW ETIQUETTE IN THE CEMETERY

BY TOM BOWLING



Perhaps the best parts of any snowstorm are the recreational opportunities, especially for children home from school. We all enjoy seeing the bliss that sledding and skiing generate. However, it is important to know where it is safe and appropriate for these activities, and that is not on cemetery grounds, particularly when the snow is deep enough to cover graves and their markers. Damage to the markers is an unfortunate by-product of these activities. It is also true that most families do not like to see ski and sled tracks over their loved one's resting place. The hard pack of snow that results from creating a fast sledding track is particularly difficult to plow. A winter's walk through the cemetery can be a good alternative and rewarding in different, but more thoughtful, ways.

BENEATH THE OAKS, II

Did you know ...

Thomas Jefferson's private secretary is interred at Ivy Hill Cemetery?
As is the son of the eighth Lord Fairfax?
As well as 57 Civil War Veterans?

The Ivy Hill site was considered a country location when the Cemetery was first established. Since then Alexandria has grown up around the quiet setting that has become a refuge in the midst of a bustling city. It is a wonderful place to visit, to tour, to gather to remember loved ones or to wander in quiet contemplation.

Beneath the Oaks, II, a directory of individuals who rest at Ivy Hill Cemetery, contains all this information and much, much more. Copies are available by mail (\$50 plus

\$6.50 for sales tax and shipping, from IHC-HPS, P.O.Box 320065, Alexandria, VA 22320) and available on-site at the Mothers' Day Picnic on May 9, 2010, starting at 1:00 p.m.



NORTHERN CARDINAL



The Northern Cardinal does not migrate. This loyal soul stays and brightens our community all year. The bright red plumage of the male and the subtler tones of

the female are in sharp contrast to the backdrop of snow they have had in the cemetery this winter.

Since both male and female cardinal sing, they provide more uplifting music than most other birds. Some birders describe their call as "cheer, cheer, cheer."

They enjoy trees and shrubs at the edge of denser growth. The Eastern Red Cedars of Ivy Hill may particularly attract them,

EASTERN RED CEDAR acting as host to their cup-shaped nests of twigs, weeds, leaves, grass, and even hair, while also providing a valuable source of food with their berry-like cones.

Visit the Society's website and use the tree locator to see seven examples from the Virginia native tree survey of Eastern Red Cedars at Ivy Hill.

Sources: http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/northern_Cardinal/id
<http://www.nhptv.org/natureworks/cardinal.htm>
<http://www.fcps.edu/islandcreekes/>

WHEN LILACS LAST IN THE DOORYARD BLOOM'D

...Comrades mine and I in the midst, and their memory ever to keep, for the dead I loved so well,
For the sweetest, wisest soul of all my days and lands -- and this for his dear sake, Lilac and star and
bird twined with the chant of my soul, There in the fragrant pines and the cedars dusk and dim.

WALT WHITMAN

PERSON OF INTEREST



SIMONNE JEANNE MICHENON

During World War II, Simonne Jeanne Michenon, a member of the French Resistance, hid refugees in the curing cellar of her family's vineyard in France.

Simonne Jeanne Michenon was born in Coulommiers, France on November 1, 1916. Her family owned and operated a countryside vineyard and she was schooled in Versailles at an all girls academy.

An American Education

Her collegiate career took her across the pond to America twice. She initially came to the US as an undergraduate exchange student at prestigious Oberlin College in Ohio. Although she returned home to France after her time at Oberlin, she would make a longer trek to the States as an English literature graduate student at Mills College in California in the decade before the outbreak of the second World War.

World War II

Back in France with her family by the beginning of the war, she witnessed Paris fall to the German occupying forces. Like many other brave young French women and men, Ms. Michenon responded by joining the French Resistance.

Her friends remember one particular story she would tell of German troops storming into her family home at the vineyard. Ms. Michenon was cooking at the time, making French sausage, saucisson. She diverted the soldiers with food, wine, and entertaining conversation until, at last, they conducted their search of the house. Feeling the effects of good drink and full stomachs, their search was cursory at best, and they left never having looked in the cellar where refugees were hiding.

After the War

Ms. Michenon's education and skills led her to an international life. She worked in Moscow after the war as an interpreter at the French Embassy. She then used the same skill at the fledgling United Nations in New York. Most of her career was spent at NATO from 1949 until her retirement in 1981, at which time she became a resident of Alexandria.

A Citizen of the World

During retirement, Ms. Michenon volunteered at the National Gallery of Art. Her full life included a love of literature, post-cubism art, travel, classical music, and fine foods and wine. Ms. Michenon died on July 10, 2007, at age 90, of respiratory failure. Her marriage had ended in divorce. Her survivors include her son, Jean Pascal Michenon of Fairview Heights, Illinois.

←—————→
Ms. Michenon was nominated to be this edition's Person of Interest by C. Braxton Moncure. Information for this article was obtained from Patricia Sullivan's obituary of Ms. Moncure.

Event Announcement

May 9, 2010

Ivy Hill Cemetery Historical
Preservation Society

hosts the annual
Mothers' Day Picnic

1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

tours starting at 2:00 p.m.

**Questions? Contact Tara Knox
at tara@ihchps.org**

Contributors

SCOTT SALTGAVER



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Scott for the
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on pages 1 & 2.

VOLUNTEERS



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CONTRIBUTORS



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