
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

P.O.Box 320065, Alexandria, Virginia 22320

info@ihchps.org

NEWSLETTER

July 2014

Horticultural Challenges of an Old Cemetery



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In this Issue
Horticultural Challenge *p1*
Bruce Johnson *p1*
Spring/Summer Events *p2*
Coming to Ivy Hill *p3*
Cemetery/Society needs *p3*
Society Contributors *p4*

One of the most obvious challenges to a beautiful, old cemetery is its aging trees. While they provide shade to visitors and character to the cemetery, they can be quite a hazard if not cared for and monitored properly. Ivy Hill is diligent with preventive care, such as pruning and disease control, and removing potentially

hazardous dead limbs or dying trees. This can be costly, but not as costly as removing fallen trees, repairing stones, and patching the grounds. Sadly, we just removed one of our dying 140 year old trees to keep it from falling on the recently restored Vault. *cont. p3*

NEW GENERAL MANAGER JOINS IVY HILL

In December 2013, Ivy Hill welcomed a new General Manager, Bruce Johnson. Mr. Johnson has lived in the Alexandria area for over thirty years, and has three children who attended TC Williams High School. He received degrees from Columbia and Duke University, and worked for both the federal and local governments in financial management before coming to Ivy Hill. He is currently involved in strategic planning and financial management at Ivy Hill. At present, one of his main focuses includes planning how best to utilize the remaining plots of land at the cemetery, keeping in mind cost-effectiveness, as well as aesthetics. Mr. Johnson emphasizes that he wants Ivy Hill Cemetery to remain a beautiful, pleasant place for people to visit. He says, "I want it to wow them." And WOW them, he has! Please come introduce yourself and check out the progress.

SPRING AND SUMMER EVENTS AT IVY HILL

This year's **Living History Tour** was a great success. Our re-enactors, through Calling Card Events, portrayed various "residents". Some featured characters were Constance Cary, Frank Stringfellow, Ellen Coolidge Burke, and some were discussed by famous relatives, such as George Mason. I am not sure who enjoyed the day most, the audience or the participants.

Our intern from Episcopal High School spent the month of May learning all there is to know about operating a small non-profit business. From pruning bushes, managing volunteers, office work, and digging graves to giving tours, researching history, and planning for the future, she got a full range of exposure to the ins and outs of Ivy Hill. It was not what she expected when signing up to work with us, and she was thrilled with the variety the job provided. Thank you **Savanah Lambert** for all your hard work!

We were fortunate to have been requested as a work site by some of our city's finest Spring for Alexandria volunteers. We had two groups help us with some major projects. The **AFD 2141** helped us clear out what had become a dumpsite in our maintenance yard, and create a beautiful nature trail down by Timberbranch Creek. You can now experience a tranquil walk in the middle of the city hearing nothing but birds, water, and the deer family tiptoeing through the brush. It is truly one of our city's greatest treasures. The team was in awe of how beautiful Ivy Hill is.

We were also very fortunate to have the staff of **John Renner, CPA** join us in finishing the Nature Trail, and help with a major bush pruning project in the cemetery. Through their efforts we made huge progress on our goal

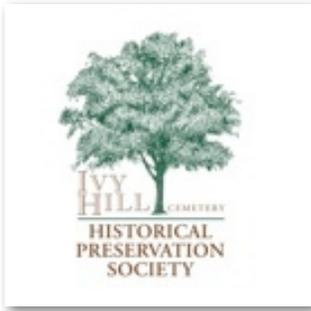
of getting the age-old plantings back to a healthier state. They are excited to come and help us in the future, so we must not have worked them too hard... During the summer our Society volunteers will continue trimming bushes and planning garden areas. Anyone is welcome to join in the fun!

There was a fantastic gathering for our **Memorial Day Flag** placement with volunteers ranging from old favorites to new faces, all bringing energy and enthusiasm to the day. The addition of a cookout has been a huge success, providing a fun atmosphere for new friendships. People stayed around after their hard work, enjoying each other and swapping stories of living in Alexandria. It was a great opportunity for new residents to hear about what it was like growing up here.

This year we had our first **Civil War Medical Practices** lecture given by Kyle Wichtendahl of the National Museum of Civil War Medicine. We learned about the major causes of death, mostly from disease, and treatments for the sick and injured. We heard great history, saw cool gadgets, and learned some very interesting myth busting facts! The Vault was a perfect venue for this topic. Our lecturer is already brainstorming on what else he can share with us in November. Embalming practices, perhaps?

The common denominator in all these events is the joy and appreciation all newcomers are feeling about your cemetery! Every re-enactor, guest speaker and volunteer has expressed an unsolicited desire to come and work with us again. They have loved the beauty and charm, the history, and the camaraderie that Ivy Hill has to offer.





COMING TO IVY HILL

What to watch for in 2014!!

Mourning Practices during the Victorian Era

Friendship Fire Annual Memorial Service

Psychic Readings by Barbara Mallon

Civil War Embalming Practices

Edgar Allan Poe Readings

Sept 13, 1:00-3:00

Oct 10, 11:00 am

Oct 18, 7:00-9:30 pm

Nov 1, 1:00-3:00

To Be Announced

for reservations, contact us at: info@ihchps.org or 703-549-7413

IVY HILL CEMETERY AND SOCIETY NEEDS

Ivy Hill is currently in need of a golf cart. If anyone has one to donate, please call the office at 703-549-7413. The Society is always looking for interesting articles on our "residents". If you would like to submit a 300 word article and a nice picture, we would love to include it in our newsletters and tours.

info@IHCHPS.org

We are in need of a volunteer to help update our Find-A-Grave entries. 703-549-7413 or info@IHCHPS.org. We always welcome volunteers to join in the fun!!

Hort Challenges cont.

Another challenge can be inappropriate plantings. Often when a family plants a shrub, the growth potential is not taken into consideration. This can cause damage to the larger plant, the family marker, and to markers of others nearby. Because it is the family's responsibility to care for any plantings forever, they often end up neglected and overgrown, obscuring the tombstone that was thoughtfully purchased. The society has taken on the task of pruning our 22 acres, and while this is a free service, we do encourage donations.

Tombstones can be damaged by lichens and our abundant ivy. The staff or volunteers can clean these upon request, however many times the family has passed on or can't come visit. Therefore, the request for help is not made. Frequent or improper cleaning can also weather a stone before its time. For proper care instructions, feel free to call us.

We have put in several gardens to add to Ivy Hill's charm, but if not well planned, these can be quickly overrun with weeds, therefore requiring more maintenance. When adding a garden space, much thought is put into native species, weather conditions, drought tolerance and low maintenance. We are very careful not to add to the burden of the small staff and to only add what

our minimal volunteer pool can assist with. Moreover, we also want to make sure that all plantings are beneficial to our wildlife.

Twenty-two acres is a good bit of ground to maintain properly, but despite the challenges things are looking pretty spiffy at your cemetery!



SOCIETY CONTRIBUTORS



Thank you to
AFD 2141 and
John Renner,
CPA Staff for
your hard work!



WEBSITE NOTICE

IHCHPS.ORG

Our website is currently undergoing a beautification and restoration project of its own. This project should be completed SOON. For other ways to keep updated on our 2014 events, feel free to email us at info@IHCHPS.org or PO Box 320065, Alexandria, VA 22320

Ivy Hill Cemetery Historical Preservation Society
P.O. Box 320065
Alexandria, VA 22320
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