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OCCC Calendar

Saturday, March 15 ~ 10 am

*What's Blooming
in the Cemetery*

Tour Guide: Sharon Patrician

Saturday, March 22 ~ 10 am

Early Roses in Bloom

Tour Guide: Judy Eitzen

Saturday, April 5 ~ 10 am

The Medicine Bag History Tour

Tour Guide: Dr. Bob LaPerriere

Sat., April 12 ~ 9:30 am - 2 pm

Open Garden

Garden Tours & Rose Sales

Saturday, May 3 ~ 10 am

*Sacramento and
California History Tour*

Tour Guide: Bill Mahan

Monday, May 5 ~ 6:30 pm

Deadheading at Dusk

Tour Guide: Anita Clevenger

Wednesday, May 7 ~ 7:30 am

Birding at the Cemetery

Tour Guide: Maureen Geiger

Saturday, May 17 ~ 10 am

*What's Blooming
in the Cemetery*

Tour Guide: Sharon Patrician

Monday, June 2 ~ 6:30 pm

Deadheading at Dusk

Tour Guide: Anita Clevenger

Friday, June 13 ~ 7 & 8:30 pm

Friday the 13th Tour

Fund-raiser, \$13 per person

Information: 916-448-0811

E.P. Figg (B122-19)

By John Bettencourt

This story about the life of a Sacramento Historic City Cemetery resident was written and presented on tours by the late John Bettencourt. Mr. Bettencourt was a founding member of the Old City Cemetery Committee.

Edward P. Figg, who obviously preferred to be called E. P., was a native of Danville, Kentucky, born in 1819.

Attaining the age of majority, E.P. went from one business venture to another. It was a series of business failures that would ultimately bring him to Lexington, Missouri, where the lure of gold took him to California in 1849. But crossing overland would provide young E.P., then 30, with a little more excitement than he bargained for.

At an early age, Figg embarked on a business venture with his brother in St. Louis. He obtained furs from trappers in the interior and marketed them in St. Louis, bringing them down river from Cincinnati.

It was a quirk of cruel fate that brought E. P. to California. He had shipped a sizeable lot of furs from Cincinnati via riverboat bound for St. Louis. Figg would later take a boat from Louisville, but upon arriving in St. Louis found that his goods had not reached there. The ship, upon which they were shipped, caught fire and sunk. No manifest. No insurance. He lost everything.

He scraped what cash he could together and went to Lexington, Missouri, where he joined a wagon train bound for California. Spring of 1849.

The train consisted of 16 wagons pulled by oxen. About 30 days into the journey, one of the wagons pulled out to take a more direct route. Figg joined the party; despite the risk of Indian attack. The party reached California in a record 71 days - the fastest time ever with ox-teams.

Upon reaching the Humholt Sink in Nevada, Figg decided to go the rest of the way to California on horseback, so gave his wagon, oxen and supplies to his companions and headed off with his rifle, bedroll, slab of bacon and hardtack.

His rations left much to be desired, and it was about a day later, upon reaching sight of the St. Mary's River that Figg saw the possibility of a change in his menu for the night. A duck circled over him then headed for the river, disappearing behind the brush and willows that lined the banks. Getting

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President's Message

By Lynda Walls

This issue of the *Epitaph* finds us well into 2008 and I must say that 2007 was a very good year for the Sacramento Historic City Cemetery. The Old City Cemetery Committee celebrated our 20th Anniversary in 2007. I hope you enjoyed our celebration in September. In October, we held our annual fund-raiser, the Lantern Tours and made tidy little sum. Thank you to all those who participated as guests and volunteers! You will find some of the photos on the following page. Check out all the photos on our web site at www.OldCityCemetery.com.

October and November found us in front of the History and Preservation Commissions as the Master Plan for the City Cemetery was studied, evaluated and eventually recommended. Volunteers in attendance were quite pleased as a member of the Preservation Commission stated that the City Cemetery was the best example of restoration in all of Sacramento! In December, the City Council approved the Master Plan and expressed their support for and appreciation of the many volunteers who have made the City Cemetery a place of beauty and historic value. We hope that in the future, the city budget will allow the City Council to show their gratitude by funding the many necessary items described in the Master Plan. You can view the Master Plan in its entirety on our web site at www.OldCityCemetery.com

Looking forward, the OCCC Board of Directors is excited to announce that our Restoration Committee will be working with the preservation firm of Page and Turnbull to document plans for the stabilization and preservation of the cemetery's artifacts. With the assistance of Page and Turnbull, we feel confident that our methods and plans will meet the Standards of the Secretary of the Interior and the approval of the Sacramento Preservation Office.

The OCCC Board has recently established an Honorarium/Memorial Fund. Donations may be made to this fund in honor of or in memory of individuals and groups. Each year the Board will designate a project to be funded by the Honorarium/Memorial Fund. This year we have chosen to install a plaque in honor of those re-interred from the New Helvetia Cemetery. As many of you know, in the 1950's, the New Helvetia Cemetery – one of Sacramento's earliest burial grounds – became the site of Sutter Middle School. Those buried in the cemetery were disinterred and relocated to the City Cemetery and to East Lawn Cemetery. The New Helvetia residents were buried in mass graves and, unfortunately, most of the headstones did not accompany them. The remains were placed in three locations in the City Cemetery, the largest group interred in the strip of lawn between the Lower and Middle Odd Fellows sections. Watch for the dedication of a beautiful four-foot by four-foot etched granite plaque listing the names of those who were moved to this area. Future projects will include plaques for the two remaining New Helvetia areas as well as carriage way signs.

We will also be seeking grants for projects that have long been out of the Committee's financial reach. Thank you to Pat Hutchings for leading an informative and inspiring workshop on grant writing! There is a long list of projects that could be funded by grants, including restoration, education and infrastructure. Anyone interested in helping us seek grants, please contact me at SayLynda@aol.com.

There is a lot to get excited about at the Sacramento Historic City Cemetery! 2008 promises to be another outstanding year for the cemetery and all our volunteers!

CEMETERIES IN THE CITY

THURSDAY, AUGUST 21, 2008

*Join us as we visit the last remaining
cemeteries in the City of San Francisco!*

*Our 2008 bus trip will visit the Columbarium (dedicated in 1898) and
the San Francisco National Cemetery (established 1884) located at the Presidio.
Watch for registration information!*

Lantern Tours



Volunteer News

By Sharon Patrician, Volunteer Coordinator

Volunteer Hours

Please call or e-mail me at 916-455-8166 or patrician@midtown.net with your monthly volunteer hours.

Weekly City Meetings

You are all welcome to come to the City staff and adopt volunteer meetings, held the first and third Tuesday of the month at 10 a.m. at the 10th Street gate office. Call Sharon at 916-455-8166 if you have any questions or concerns.

Are Gophers a Scourge in Your Plot?

If you have gardened at the cemetery for over a year, you have probably encountered gophers. These rodents are plant eaters and love anything with tubers, large roots or bulbs (except daffodils and certain others which are poison to them). You will find their entrance holes in predominantly open areas without tree roots.

The cemetery staff has purchased a humane trap called the "Black Hole" which is relatively easy to set and insert in a gopher run. You are welcome to

borrow a trap and try your luck. Baiting the trap with a bit of carrot might help.

Be warned: For an animal with a brain the size of a walnut, they are surprisingly difficult to trap. Persevere and you may have a dead gopher on your hands (which you should put in a plastic bag, secure the same and put into a garbage can). The traps are humane in that they kill quickly without puncturing the skin. Contact Victor or Curtis about using the traps.

Thieves are Afoot in the Cemetery

Jane Howell has alerted me that thieves have stolen the metal flower holders in the Masonic Cemetery and have smashed car windows to get purses and other valuables. They have no doubt checked out our cemetery, so please be careful about your valuables when you visit or work. We recommend you take your purse with you when you have to be away from your car for an extended period.

We wish there were nicer people out there, but since there are not, be alert.

Meet the Volunteers

We are continuing our series on volunteers in the Cemetery. Meet Barbara and Anita. These women manage one of the three major gardens in the cemetery: The Historic Rose Garden.



Barbara Oliva

Barbara came to the cemetery about 1991 where she met Fred Boutin, a retired botanist, and learned he had a collection of antique roses planted in the Historic City Cemetery. Retired since 1988 after teaching for 36 years, Barbara knew the cemetery was a special

place. She began volunteering promptly so she could learn about old roses.

In 1994, she began giving tours to visitors. She has toured Europe and China observing the same roses that are in the cemetery. She also serves on the Board

of Trustees for the Heritage Rose Foundation. Her involvement has led to international recognition of the cemetery's antique rose collection. The cemetery is described as an "important garden featuring old roses."

The Historic Rose Garden has been featured in Pacific Horticulture, the Sacramento Bee, the Los Angeles Times, and in the journal of old roses, Rosa Mundi. Barbara has a moss hybrid rose named after her, called "Barbara Oliva." There is also "Barbara's Apricot Musk" named by rose hybridizer, Robert Rippetoe, after a seedling of the rose was found in the cemetery. This rose is only available from Mr. Rippetoe.

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Meet the Volunteers - continued from page 4

Barbara Oliva, Continued

Additionally, Barbara is on the Board of Directors for the Old City Cemetery Committee. She has participated in many events at the cemetery and provided input for the recently-approved Master Plan for the Historic City Cemetery. Barbara also created the Open Garden concept, held every April since 1996, which features the rose garden at its best. This one-day event provides roses for sale, offers tours of the rose garden and provides information on old species roses.

Barbara most enjoys the interaction with visitors and volunteers who come curious about species roses and sometimes go away converts. She also loves working with the roses and puts in many hundreds of hours every year.

When asked what she would like to see happen in the future, her immediate response was to "ensure the future of the rose garden in the cemetery." She would also like to donate her collection of rose books as a library available to cemetery volunteers.

In the meantime, Barbara continues to reinforce her knowledge of old roses by attending numerous rose symposiums, conventions, educational seminars and visiting rose gardens. She has turned over her full-time management of the rose garden to Anita Clevenger so she may concentrate on tours, pruning classes and her role as curator for the Historic Rose Garden.

For more information about the Historic Rose Garden, see www.cemeteryrose.org.



Anita Clevenger

When Anita retired as Logistics Manager for the Air Force at McClellan AFB in 2001, she knew she wanted volunteer work where she could be outside every day. Her career had taken her to Germany, Ohio and finally to Sacramento where she oversaw, in part, the base closure of McClellan. That

work had been in windowless rooms, and Anita felt her retirement should be in the fresh air.

In 2003, she came to the cemetery to help with pruning in the Historic Rose Garden and felt this was exactly what she wanted to do. She had always loved old cemeteries with their old roses and she wanted to know more. She and Barbara Oliva manage the old rose collection together, with Anita managing the more physical aspects.

In addition to her work at the cemetery, Anita found time to study for and become a certified Lifetime Master Gardener for Sacramento County. She also writes a gardening article for Inside Publications. She describes her writing style as a garden essayist who is speaking to kindred souls.

Anita is also on the Board of the Friends of McKinley Library, is involved in a water sampling project, gives talks and presentations about the cemetery roses and attends many symposiums, classes and garden tours to enhance her gardening knowledge. Anita is greatly involved with her immediate family (husband and son) and manages to visit her mother in Ohio several times a year to help her remain independent.

Anita delights in sharing the Historic Rose Garden with volunteers, guests and visitors and has put together a very detailed and inspired tour presentation of the history and botany of old roses.

Anita's wish for the future of the cemetery is in the installation of a decent irrigation system. She also feels ensuring the cemetery's status as a historic site is extremely important. Finally, Anita wants to continue building support for the rose volunteers and the garden so its international reputation will only increase with time.

We Want YOU to Join!

Become a Friend of the Cemetery!

Membership is easy! It only takes a few minutes to complete the membership application on the back of this newsletter. Membership is beneficial. Every membership shows community support for the Sacramento Historic City Cemetery and awareness of the importance of this beautiful historic site. Membership is inexpensive. It will be the best fifteen bucks you spend all year!

E.P. Figg - Continued from page 1

as close as he could on horseback, he dismounted, grabbed his rifle, and stealthily crept through the bush toward the river. He was just about to make his way through the willows when he heard the bushes move around him. The bushes moved... closer and closer. Then, suddenly it was quiet. Figg jumped up to get a better look ...and to his great surprise found



himself surrounded by five half naked savages with bows drawn. They had probably seen the same duck and had plans for their evening meal when, instead of the duck, they found Figg.

At this point Figg wished that he had stayed with his regular menu of hardtack and bacon, rather than the "catch of the day," because he, and not the duck, was the one that was caught.

He was in a terrible predicament. Surely, his hour had come to meet his maker.

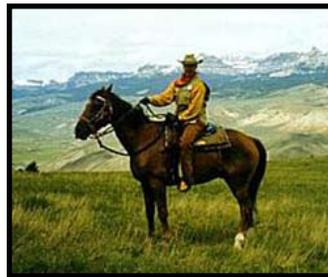
Just when all seemed to be coming to an end, Figg heard a voice that came from the high bluffs across the river.

"Hello down there; Have those Injuns got you captured?"

It was an advanced party from another wagon train, who obviously had been drawn to the river by the same duck, only to find Figg in his predicament.

"Not exactly," Figg called back, "but I just don't know how to get out of here."

"Hold on," said the scout, "I'm comin' down."



And he did. With his rifle across his saddle, the scout slowly crossed the river, rode up the bank, through the willows and joined E. P. in the circle of Indians with their bows drawn.



Figg and the scout devised a plan. They would lower their rifles on the count of three and motion the Indians to leave. If this failed, Figg was to start shooting from left to center and the scout from right to center. The count made, both lowered their rifles and motioned for the Indians to "get."

Now the Indians had duck dinner in mind and this was a little more than they had bargained for. They made a hasty withdrawal into the willows and disappeared.

Figg never explains just who this brave scout was or what happened to the duck, but obviously it did not grace the menu of any of the afore mentioned.

Figg continued his journey to Sacramento, arriving in September of 1849. He later would rank as one of Sacramento's most prominent businessmen and capitalist.

Upon arriving in Sacramento, Figg went into the mercantile business, and although the firm suffered a loss of some \$150,000 in the disastrous conflagration of 1852, he survived, rebuilt, and continued to prosper until he sold the business and turned his attention to mining stock speculation and real estate, both of which proved successful.

E.P. Figg died on March 27, 1895 at age 75.

Read more stories of the lives of
Sacramento Historic City Cemetery residents
at www.OldCityCemetery.com

Thank you, Jim Henley

By Dr. Bob LaPerriere, Founding Board Member

From the first time I met Jim, over two decades ago, I knew this was a man I liked...we shared not only a passion for history, but also a love of food, especially the cuisine of the southwest. Since then, he has been a source of continuous knowledge, encouragement and support in many projects, from medical history to cemeteries.

On behalf of the Old City Cemetery Committee, I wish to convey our thanks for the tremendous support and encouragement he has provided over many years.

Without Jim's interest and support in the preservation of the Sacramento Historic City Cemetery, I do not think we would have the protection we now have... security, but additionally a beautiful protective fence and new gates.

Without his support we would not have our Adopt-a-Plot program that has beautified hundreds of otherwise neglected family plots within the cemetery.

And without his support, understanding and guidance we would not have been able to carry out the various programs and functions that have both educated the community about the importance of this historic site and raised funds to carry out the repair of multitudes of damaged monuments.

And additionally, and most important for the future of the cemetery, we are indebted to Jim for his realization of the need for a Master Plan, and for the initiation and support of this project which has recently been completed.

Thank you Jim...for being a friend to all of us, sharing your encyclopedic knowledge of Sacramento history, and continuously supporting us in our goals.

We wish you a wonderful retirement filled with all the things you love to do...and lots of great southwestern cuisine.



OPEN GARDEN

SATURDAY, APRIL 12, 2008

9:30 AM TO 2 PM

*Experience the splendor of heritage roses
in a unique 19th Century setting!*

Join us as experts lead free tours of our beautiful gardens. And don't miss this once a year opportunity to buy rooted cuttings from the many heritage roses found in the Historic Rose Garden.

