

FALL 2013

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## Lantern Tour Time

**SOLD OUT!**

Fall is here—Time for Lantern Tours. A limited number of tickets are available for what promises to be a very enjoyable event. Volunteers, actors and researchers are busy putting the final touches on a new series of stories and historical vignettes designed to showcase some of early Sacramento's more "interesting" denizens.

Tickets (priced at \$30) are going fast and can be ordered online from [www.brownpapertickets.com/event/452659](http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/452659). Tours are scheduled at 7:00, 7:45, 8:30 and 9:15 p.m. on four nights: October 18 & 19 and October 25 & 26. Guests are encouraged to wear historic costume and join in the fun.

Parking will be available in the lot across the street from the Cemetery entrance; take care when crossing Broadway, especially after dark.

## A Bench-Mark Project

by Sharon Patrician

Every weekend, we see them – the men in orange vests working in the cemetery, weeding, mowing, hauling and so forth. Most people don't give them a glance, but this volunteer has worked closely with such men for 19 years and has learned not everything is as it appears.

To most onlookers, these men are offenders, put in the cemetery to work off their jail time with manual labor. The more complete truth is many of these men have experience in everything from engineering to software design to electrician and plumbing skills. The cemetery has

used these skills over the years to keep the cemetery's infrastructure in good repair and the gardens beautiful.

The Sheriff's Work Release crew is comprised of all sorts of men. As offenders, they are not choir boys, but neither are they despicable criminals. They are a cross section of society at large, and for all the weekends I have worked with them, my experience has been overwhelmingly positive. I've been treated with respect and kindness, and while the experience is not what they might have chosen, I believe they put in their time with a heightened appre-

*(Continued on page 4)*

# President's Message

Welcome to Fall when we focus on our major fundraisers for the year—the Lantern Tours. Last year's tours were very successful and from what I'm hearing, this year's plans are sounding great

Volunteers will be recognized at the end of this month for the enormous contribution they make to the continuation of the Old City Cemetery's goals and objectives. It takes a large group to keep things going over our 30 acres; City staff, Sheriff's Work Release crews and many volunteer hours.

At our annual membership meeting in June, members approved a revision of the OCCC By-laws, giving additional flexibility to the Board which will assist us to develop a closer working relationship with the City of Sacramento.

A small team has begun meeting with City staff to discuss our relationship to expand opportunities for cooperation and to identify additional revenue streams to support Cemetery activities.

One topic under discussion is the need to track information about Cemetery activities (burials, headstones, gardens, individual's histories of the people buried here, etc.) and to make this information available to the public.

We continue to work to develop better ways to improve and support the Cemetery. My thanks to those who participate in our various activities.

*Questions, comments, concerns,*  
Judy Eitzen  
685-6634

## Fall Events in the Cemetery

Sep 28 - Cemetery Adventures for Beginners

Oct 5 - Misbehaving Politicians

Oct 19 - What's Blooming (Rain Cancels)

Oct 18, 19, 25 & 26 Lantern Tours Fri & Sat, 7 pm, 7:45 pm,  
8:30 pm, 9:15 p.m.

(tickets: [www.brownpapertickets.com/event/452659](http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/452659))

Nov 9—Patriotism & Sacramentans' Involvement in US Wars

Nov 16—Fall Color in the Rose Garden (Rain Cancels)

Dec 7—Rose Pruning Class (Rain Cancels)

# Autumn Color in the Cemetery

Two special tours are scheduled to show off the wonderful colors the Cemetery in fall. The first, led by Sharon Patrician will be on October 19 and will focus on perennials blooming throughout the Cemetery.

The second, a month later on November 16, will be led by Anita Clevenger and will focus on leaf and bloom color in the Historic Rose Garden.

While spring and summer garden tours feature beautiful blooming plants in the Cemetery, these two tours feature colorful leaves, bark, rose hips and seed pods. If you haven't visited the

Cemetery on a bright sunny fall day, you're in for a treat.

In summer we notice the shade our trees provide and colorful blooms on flowering plants, which can be quite spectacular. By autumn, summer blooms have faded and we find the Cemetery is still full of color. Do plan to visit in the fall, particularly on one of these two tours to learn about the plants that put on a very colorful show each autumn.

Both tours begin at 10 a.m. and are free. Please park in the lot across the street as inside the Cemetery parking is limited.



**Red-orange trees, bright yellow leaves and colorful hips on roses—what could be more beautiful?**

# Benches, con't.

*(Continued from page 1)*

ciation of what the cemetery means in our history.

There is an unspoken etiquette between volunteers and the crew that unless volunteered, we never ask why a person is on the Sheriff's Work Release crew. We work together in the here and now and their "offenses" have no bearing on the task at hand.

For the past two months I have worked with Justin Wares and Javier Gonzalez (not his real name) refinishing the benches scattered throughout the cemetery. To me, these two men are outstanding examples of people who made mistakes and are making the best of their court-ordered restitution.

Justin is a Tower Technician with Cal North Telecom, and Javier is an engineer with a large agency. They were assigned to refinish the benches installed in the cemetery over 23 years ago. They have personally helped with ten of the eleven benches remaining on the repair list. Justin has wood-working skills and has mentored Javier to the point Javier wants to continue this skill on his own.

To accomplish the bench refinishing task with limited materials and tools, Justin's company, Cal North Telecom, donated several two-by-fours

from wood used to stabilize equipment as towers are installed in the mountains. His company also lent hundreds of feet of extension cord and a rotor hammer drill to put bolts back into the concrete pads for the benches. Justin donated these special bolts, and to complete the job I donated some wood stain and varnish.

As Justin put it: "The cemetery was a surprise to me. I was pleased to be able to do interesting jobs, such as fixing the mowing equipment, and now the benches." Javier's feelings were

that "... coming from a negative experience to helping beautify the cemetery" made him feel he has contributed to the history and preservation of a historic place. Both men expressed their awe at the beauty of our cemetery and they are inter-



**Justin & Javier refinish boards,**

ested in the stories all around them.

Their "debt" will be paid in November, but they both feel they are taking a positive experience with them. And as their supervisor for this short period, I will remember them as gentlemen who dealt with their assignments with enthusiasm, creativity and care. Thanks to the partnership of the City, the Sacramento Sheriff's Work Release Program and the Old City Cemetery Committee volunteers, our historic cemetery is a fine example of what a few materials, boundless enthusiasm and focused energy can

# YouTube—Who Knew?

by Judy Eitzen

Everyone knows YouTube is the place to find cute cat and kitten videos, but did you know history lives on YouTube as well? The Center for Sacramento History (formerly known as the Sacramento Archives and Museum Collection Center – SAMCC) has posted fifty-five short videos about Sacramento and California history. In the videos, historian Jim Henley, former Director of the Center, speaks on a variety of topics, describing events in Sacramento’s past.

Topics include the origins of the Sacramento Historical Society, the Knot Hole Gang (Sacramento Solons),

early Sacramento radio, the coming of railroads, floods, fire and disease, victory gardens and descriptions of how county records (and other collections) came to the Center.

Jim has a way with words, making history come alive and encouraging this viewer to learn more about the subjects.

You can find these videos on YouTube by entering “Small Bites of Sacramento History” and sit back and enjoy.

(You can always plug in a cat video later if you must!)



Replace the finished bench, and...



are the first to try it out.

# Nothing Lasts Forever

*Judy Eitzen*

Not even in the Cemetery, but two things may come close. Two very different monuments in the Historic City Cemetery may outlast the end of time simply because of their size and weight.

The first is the smaller of the two, with a stone weighing in at just over 18 tons (36,000 pounds). This is the Purkitt family stone located on the east side of the Cemetery on Cedar Avenue.

The family lived in Willows, California and the patriarch, George Henry Purkitt, was born in Illinois in 1838 and died in Willows in 1915. He was trained as a civil engineer came west to mine for gold, worked in various mercantile ventures, eventually becoming a Deputy Sheriff in Colusa County and worked as the county surveyor. After his marriage to Theodora Tiffée, he managed her family's ranch before moving to Willows. He was a member of the commission assigned to form Glenn County and was instrumental in naming Willows as the county seat. Theodora was trained at the Sacramento Seminary and eventually graduated from Cooper Medical College with honors, opening a medical office in Willows. Theodora died in 1923. Various members of the Purkitt and Tiffée families are buried in the Historic City Cemetery near the unusual stone.

The stone was traveling on a flat-bed rail car passing through the town of Sites in Colusa County when it rolled off the train as the train rounded a curve in the route. The flat car was wrecked and the stone (all 18 tons of it) remained by the side of the road for some years. At the behest of the Purkitts, it was moved to the Sacramento City Cemetery on a many wheeled lowbed trailer at the cost of \$25 per hour (both ways). The truck moved at 18 miles per hour; this was an expensive move. Hoisting equipment was used to place the stone onto rollers over which it was moved to the family plot.

The second "permanent" item seriously outweighs the Purkitt stone: Mark Hopkins' mausoleum. As described in the September 29, 1880 Sacramento Union, each of the rough blocks

used in the tomb weighed 36 ton (72,000 pounds). The mausoleum is 19 feet, 9 ½ inches by 10 feet, 10 inches, so one would expect it to outlast nearly anything. As stated in the Union, "So nicely is the work finished, that very few will, by looking upon it, understand the great difficulty experienced in matching and fitting in such a structure polished stones one to another, and where there is not a single broken joint."

There are, of course some questions about the mausoleum. Why, did Mrs. Hopkins elect the particular plot when Hopkins himself had purchased a different one? Why is there space for 16 interments but only four names appear on the structure? Is the fourth individual really inside? He died at sea and this usually means no remains are available for burial.

Some questions can be answered, however. For example, why Rocky Mountain red granite instead of a local stone? Mrs. Hopkins ordered it because it came from the highest point of the Union Pacific Railroad's crossing of the Rocky Mountains; a spot that was admired by Hopkins on his first transcontinental train crossing. Another: the Egyptian style of the mausoleum reflects the granite surround of the Pioneer plot, a style much in vogue in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

At the time of its construction, this mausoleum was the heaviest, most massive 'building' in California, as befitted one of the 'Big Four' who constructed the western half of the Transcontinental Railroad.



Purkitt Stone

# Volunteer Appreciation

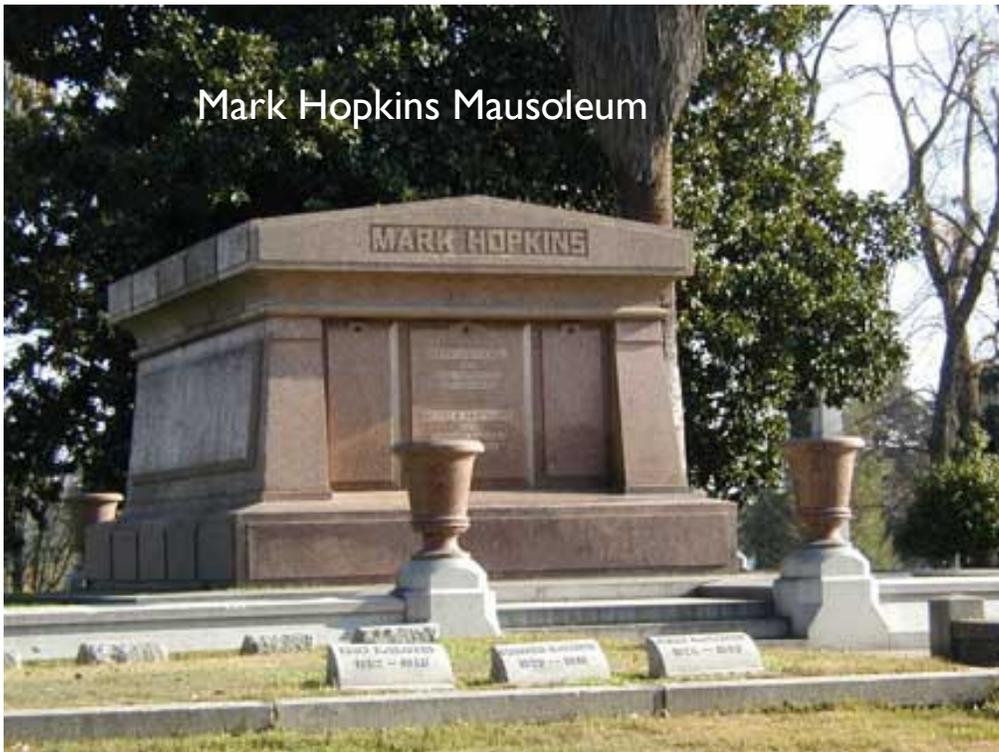
On September 28, from 3-5 p.m. an Ice Cream Social will be held to honor the Cemetery's many volunteers. As part of the celebration, we will honor the Sacramento Tree Foundation for their assistance in working with the City and Cemetery volunteers to replace trees throughout the Cemetery.

The event will be held near the Fireman's Plot. Burr's Fountain has donated ice cream for the event and Gold Rush tunes will be presented by Claudia's Kitchen.

Please encourage all Cemetery volunteers to attend this afternoon event. RSVP to Sharon Patricia at [patricianone@att.net](mailto:patricianone@att.net) or 916-455-8166



Mark Hopkins Mausoleum





**Old City Cemetery  
Committee, Inc.**

1000 Broadway  
Sacramento, CA 95818  
916-448-0811

***Mission Statement***

*To join hands with the community to restore, beautify, preserve and protect the Historic City Cemetery, while maintaining access by descendants of the deceased, and to provide educational services to all visitors to the Historic City Cemetery of Sacramento.*

[www.oldcitycemetery.com](http://www.oldcitycemetery.com)

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*NOTE: Saturday tours and classes are free and begin at 10 a.m.*