



The Evergreens Cemetery Quarterly Newsletter

Letter from the President

In April 2015 I was excited to start in my new role as President of The Evergreens Cemetery. The cemetery is a beautiful oasis located in the heart of Brooklyn with a rich history dating back to 1849, when it was established as a nonsectarian pastoral cemetery welcoming and open to all. The Evergreens is one of the oldest cemeteries in New York City, and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

This year has infused new life into the Evergreens. We have developed a slate of programs designed to allow people to enjoy the 225 acres of beautiful landscaped grounds and to celebrate the rich history of the notable people who are buried here. We have established partnerships with groups such as the New York Audubon Society, the Amateur Astronomers Association, the Girl Scouts, Urban Arborists, and local schools to bring a wide public into the cemetery for our programs. We are engaging with stakeholders in our community by means of programs such as historical tours, birdwatching, stargazing, children's events, dance performances, and others. Next year we will expand our offerings to include yoga classes and tours on the art and architecture of the cemetery, as well as other exciting new programs.

In January we opened our community mausoleum, that includes beautiful landscaping, a fountain, new restrooms, and benches for reflection to fulfill our important mission to serve our families and their loved ones in a tranquil and reverent setting.

This fall we underwent an extensive beautification project, pruning over 500 trees damaged in Hurricane Sandy in 2012. By enhancing our landscaping we aim to provide a tranquil final resting place, as well as peaceful space for visitors. We are pleased that we have been able to pave many of our roadways and sidewalks recently, allowing greater ease of access for all of our visitors.

We are proud of our distinguished history and rich legacy of serving families for over 167 years. We look forward to continuing the highest standards of excellence in fulfilling our mission.

With best wishes for a happy and healthy holiday season,

Julie Bose



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Cemetery Hours

Grounds are open seven days a week from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm.

The office is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Please contact the office about holiday closures.

Notable Resident

Charles Goodwin Bennett (1864-1914)



Charles G. Bennett, c. 1910



Bennett's grave at the Evergreens Cemetery

Of the former Congressmen buried at the Evergreens, the best known was Charles Goodwin Bennett (1864-1914), in part for his public service in Washington, and in part because of his and his family's long involvement with the management of the cemetery. The son of the newspaper publisher who was the Evergreens' president, George. C. Bennett, Charles was born in 1863 and raised near the Evergreens. After attending Brooklyn schools and New York Law School, young Charles Bennett became a lawyer, was active in Brooklyn's Republican Party, and joined the Evergreens Board of Trustees at the age of 23. He later was president of the Board for several years.

Bennett was elected to the House of Representatives in 1894 representing Brooklyn's Fifth District. The Brooklyn Daily Eagle praised him as a man of vigor -- "no namby-pamby in politics, but a hard hitter, and one for whom the Pharisaical vice of hypocrisy was as hideous as ingratitude" -- molded on the image of that rising star of American politics, Theodore Roosevelt. Bennett looked after Brooklyn's interests well enough, backing the construction of the Williamsburg Bridge and the dredging of stagnant Newtown Creek, but in 1898 the Republicans were thoroughly out-organized by the Democrats and Bennett was not reelected to Congress. In 1900 he returned to Washington as secretary of the United States Senate, holding the position for 13 years, the third longest tenure as secretary in the Senate's history.

Source: *Green Oasis in Brooklyn, The Evergreens Cemetery 1849-2008* by John Rousmaniere



Tap Attack, May 22, 2016

Photo courtesy of Caroline D. Roswell

Programs

In 2016 we have expanded our public programs to bring awareness to the cultural and historic significance of the cemetery and provide the opportunity for the community to enjoy the beautiful landscape of the Evergreens. Eva Bowerman, the new Director of Programs, joins Veronica Willis in bringing a varied calendar of programming to the Evergreens. This year we hosted events such as walking tours, stargazing events, a bird watching walk, a tap dance celebration and a dance performance.

In 2017 we will repeat many of the successful events we have held, including birdwatching tours with the New York City Audubon Society, stargazing events with the Amateur Astronomers Association, historical tours with Evergreens Historian Donato "Danny" Daddario, a wreath-laying ceremony for the victims of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire, a celebration of Bojangles' birthday for National Tap Day in May, an event for Memorial Day, a Thanksgiving food drive, a holiday toy drive and holiday party and Arbor Day. We will also expand our programming to include an Arbor Day event, yoga classes and tours of cemetery art and architecture, among other events. Please learn more about our upcoming events on our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/TheEvergreenscemetery).



Staff Spotlight - Interview with Anthony Salamone, Family Service Counselor

What is your position at the Evergreens?

Right now, I am the Salesman. Or as my new card reads, the Family Service Counselor.

How long have you worked here?

I started working here on March 17th, 1970.

Oh, wow!

Yeah, it's almost like I opened the joint. Long time...

What were you doing when you first started working at the cemetery?

When I first started working here I was made steady the first year, about three months after I started. Nobody wanted the job—that job was the lowest job in the place, so I took it. I was waiting to go on the sanitation.

I started as a lot cleaner. We used to fill in the burials by hand back then. And then we would go take the flowers, just leave one or two floral pieces and we would clean up all around, make a mound. In some sections we weren't allowed to make a mound and we would wheel roll the dirt out with a wheelbarrow.

The first thing I did the first day—they gave me a pitch fork, and it was the first day the seasonals came back, so the seasonals that had seniority then went out to what they did the year before.

The new guys, we got a wheelbarrow and pitchfork and we went around and, like I said, it was March 17th, and we went around picking up any of the Christmas wreaths and blankets that weren't picked up yet.

And what job did you have after that?

At that point when I made steady I was a lot cleaner, then the next job I had was a power machine operator. Power machine operators were all steady men back then.

I was a power machine operator, then a backhoe job came up and I became number one backhoe operator, then I needed more over-time, and I wasn't getting enough on the backhoe, so the tree man job came up and I took that because it was a chauffeur's job and we rotated the watchman overtime, plus you got Saturdays. I drove a plank truck, delivering the lumber and the shoring bars and everything. Then after that, they asked me if I wanted to come out of the union and be the Assistant Superintendent.

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Trees of the Evergreens Cemetery and the Aftermath of Hurricane Sandy

By Helen Thurston

The Evergreens Cemetery has between 3,500 and 4,000 trees, including many ancient specimens, on its 225 rolling acres. Although Hurricane Sandy blew through nearly 4 years ago, the harm to the cemetery's historic trees and grounds has been long-lasting, and the cemetery is still working to mitigate the damage. More than 50 historic trees were toppled during the night of October 29, 2012 and the following day as a result of the sustained high winds of Sandy. The cemetery was an impassable scene of destruction. Many trees had crashed on monuments, and roadways and curbs were torn up by massive root systems unable to hold the trees against the winds. The Evergreens was one of many areas damaged by Hurricane Sandy, one of the most destructive and costly hurricanes ever to reach landfall in the United States.

Immediately after Hurricane Sandy, the grounds and tree crews at the cemetery worked tirelessly to take care of the immediate damage. Over the course of several days and weeks the roads were cleared, the large fallen trees removed and the roads repaired, making it safe for passage by the public.

Unfortunately, the damage to the trees of the Evergreens did not end after Sandy passed through. Many trees that survived the intense storm became severely stressed as a result of Sandy's high and sustained twisting winds.

Over the next two growing seasons, the cemetery grounds crews closely monitored those magnificent trees, hoping that they would survive and nursing them along. But many -- an additional 35 -- trees were so stressed that they were not able to survive. By the end of the second growing season after Sandy, their demise was apparent. Altogether, the cemetery lost close to one hundred large historic trees, many of them planted decades ago, as a result of Hurricane Sandy.

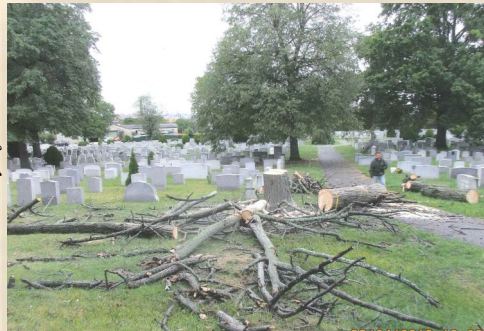
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Trees of the Evergreens Cemetery and the Aftermath of Hurricane Sandy (continued)



BEFORE TREATMENT



AFTER TREATMENT

Fortunately, the cemetery secured a special Hurricane Sandy Disaster Relief grant from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. Some of the funds were earmarked to address the continuing need for tree care. Thanks to this support, the cemetery has been able to enlist the help of Urban Arborists, a local Brooklyn tree company. Since July 2016 the company has been methodically removing dead trees and pruning hurricane-damaged limbs from sections throughout the cemetery. Tree-climbing crews with ropes and special equipment are able to remove the trees killed by Sandy bit by bit. A stump grinder is used to grind down the base of the tree to below the ground level. The limbs are chipped, and their chips are turned into mulch for sustainable purposes.

Bill Logan, the head of Urban Arborists, notes that the tree climbing technique is an especially careful method, compared to the more static method of using arborists in cherry pickers, since skilled individual climbers can move dexterously in the trees. Urban Arborists use ropes to lower branches to the ground, taking care that branches do not fall on grave-stones.

As a result of the removal of cracked and damaged branches, historic vistas are now more clearly visible, and the cemetery looks well groomed and the trees are healthier.

The Evergreens has kept meticulous records of where the removed trees were located, as well as of their species. When the time comes to purchase new trees, the original trees will be remembered and evoked in the new plantings. These new plantings will take place over the over the next few years and will be coordinated with Arbor Day events for the public.

The Evergreens Cemetery Holiday Party

On Saturday, December 3rd we held a holiday party from 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. Visitors from the community enjoyed this festive event, which included a visit from Santa, trips aboard the Santa Express trackless train, a S'mores station and hot chocolate.

We would like to thank Vincent J. Carbone of Carbone Memorials, INC. for his generous sponsorship of the trackless train at this event.



Staff Spotlight (continued)

So I said give me a couple of days to think about it, and I thought about it, and said "you know what—I'll take a shot and you'll never know." So I came out of the union and was Assistant Superintendent from 1993, I think it was, until I retired on July 1, 2008. I retired and ...6, 5 weeks into retirement I thought "this is insane. I can't do this." So I called up Paul Rossi, who was the President at the time and I said, "You've got to give me two days a week." Then Julie took over as President and became three days every week, then it became four days every week. Now it's four days and every other Saturday.

So when you came back from retirement you started in sales?

Yeah, because I was doing sales too, I did sales prior to that but never strictly that.

And what does your position consist of? How do you spend a typical day?

A typical day for me now is doing grave sales, obviously, and sales in the crypt, the mausoleum.

And then I help out, you know, if somebody needs something, people need directions or you know. I'm constantly on the phone with these people and with some monument dealers. That's what I do now.

What do you find the most enjoyable part of the job?

The most enjoyable part? I guess the sales part.

How do you feel like the Evergreens has changed over the course of your time here?

Well, when I came here a lot of things were done by hand, as I mentioned we even dug graves by hand. Machines were there, but there were sections where the General Foreman would not allow back-hoes to go, like on a rainy day like this there were certain sections that we just wouldn't put a backhoe in, and you had to dig the grave by hand. That was not a lot of fun but it had to be done.

How do people react when you tell them you work at a cemetery?

People think that everybody in the cemetery is a gravedigger except the boss. My standard answer now is: "it bought me a house, it educated my kids, it buys me new cars, it keeps me in my train addiction, my model train addiction, so it hasn't been a bad life."

What do you like to do when you're not working?

Well, I play with trains, I play with electric trains. I love all that, I love it. Someday, I'm going to build a giant railroad. That day just hasn't arrived yet. I just play with them. Up until this year I was coaching Little League football, I'll maybe do that again next year. And sports - I just sit down with my sons and we just scream at one another and we root for the same team, it makes no sense. Then you know, go out to eat, I like to eat, That's about it. I don't like traveling too much.

Where do you live?

I live near Marine Park in Flatbush.

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Designer - Kelly C. Ruffel



The Evergreens Cemetery Annual Appeal

It is not easy taking care of a 167 year old historic cemetery, and we hope you will join us in supporting this invaluable cultural and natural resource. Each year, the Evergreens Cemetery receives donations from members of the public who wish to help sustain the beauty, the tranquility and the accessibility of the Evergreens. Some wish to support the maintenance required to keep our 225 acres of rolling hills and meadows with their historic trees and monuments in good condition. Others give donations to support our public programming, such as veterans' events, bird walks, children's and seasonal events that welcome both neighbors and visitors from far away to our beautiful grounds.

We want to continue our care of the Evergreens and so each year, around this time, we reach out and ask for contributions to our annual appeal. We are particularly grateful for small donations, which often come from our neighbors. We also appreciate the donations that are dedicated to specific needs, such as historic tree maintenance or monument repair, which are part of our ongoing routine at the Evergreens.

We appreciate your participation in our annual fund appeal. Please join us in supporting the Evergreens Cemetery with your tax deductible gift. You may [click on this link](#) to donate by credit card, or send your check to The Evergreens Cemetery Preservation Foundation, 1629 Bushwick Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11207.

Making Arrangements

The Evergreens Cemetery provides a beautiful final resting place for loved ones, and we are pleased to discuss the variety of options available.

Contact:

Anthony Salamone

Family Service Counselor

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