



Heritage Newsletter

Dedicated to Maintaining the Historic Beauty of Cypress Lawn
A cemetery serving the San Francisco Bay Area with an unsurpassed tradition of caring since 1892

A publication of the Cypress Lawn Heritage Foundation

Spring 2008

Volume 5 No. 4

Calendar

Walking Tour: April 19, 2008
Saturday, 1:30 pm

Splendor in the Glass
Front of Administration Bldg.
Docent: Terry Hamburg

Lecture: April 20, 2008
Sunday, 2 pm, Reception Center

**The Legacies of Trees and
Foresight: San Francisco Botanical
Garden and Cypress Lawn**
Lecturer: Michael McKechnie
and Don Mahoney
SF Botanical Garden

Walking Tour: April 26, 2008
Saturday, 1:30 pm

Good Things Come in Trees
Docent: Dennis Granahan
Start at Noble Chapel

Walking Tour: May 17, 2008
Saturday, 1:30 pm

**Armed Forces Day Special: Military
Personalities at Rest
at Cypress Lawn**
Docent: Terry Hamburg
Start at Noble Chapel

Lecture: May 18, 2008
Sunday, 2 pm, Reception Center
**Show and Tell at Cypress Lawn:
Antiques Appraisal**
Lecturer: Terry Hamburg

Lecture: June 15, 2008
Sunday, 2 pm, Reception Center
**The Royals Revisited - The King is
Dead, Let the Celebrating Begin**
Lecturer: Michael Svanevik

Walking Tour: June 21, 2008
Saturday, 1:30 pm
**Cypress Lawn's Notable Artists
and Architects**
Docent: Terry Hamburg
Start at Noble Chapel

All events are **FREE!**
650. 550-8810 (tour line)
650. 550-8811 (lecture line)
Please RSVP for all tours

The "Boss Gardener" of Golden Gate Park

By *Christopher Pollok*

Two men with distinctly different styles share the credit for the creation of Golden Gate Park in San Francisco: engineer William Hammond Hall, for the park's framework and initial landscaping, and horticulturist John McLaren, who made the park his personal mission until his death.

McLaren's long tenure often overshadows Hall's expertise, but the determined efforts of both men led to what exists today. Legendary John Hays McLaren (1846–1943) presided over the park as its superintendent for 53 years. Hailing from a farm in Stirling, Scotland, just west of the Firth of Forth, the stocky Scot learned his trade by working on nearby estates from the age of 16. Later he worked in Edinburgh's Royal Botanical Gardens. At age 24, he sailed for America.

A short time after arriving on the east coast in 1869, he proceeded to the west coast by ships and by a train across the Isthmus of Panama. Finally settling in San Mateo County, McLaren worked on large estates for 15 years before joining the park. He was employed primarily on the lavish George H. Howard Estate, "El Cerrito," and did work for other notables, such as financier William Chapman Ralston, railroad tycoon Leland Stanford, and banker Darius Ogden Mills. He is responsible for the continuous rows of eucalyptus trees that still line El Camino Real along the Peninsula.

Following three years as assistant superintendent, McLaren became superintendent in 1890, overseeing 40 gardeners whose ranks

From the President's Desk



Kenneth E. Varner

In this issue of the Heritage Newsletter we are featuring a significant person who helped in the creation and blossoming of one of San Francisco's enduring playgrounds. As spring is now in full swing, we thought it would be appropriate for the Newsletter to celebrate the life and achievements of John Hays McLaren, one of two very important persons in the design and development of San Francisco's foremost park - the Golden Gate Park. John McLaren is at rest at Cypress Lawn Memorial Park.

It also gives me great pride to announce that we have acquired an important French work of art from one of our ardent supporters, Sir William Fries II. The bronze sculpture Gloria Victis now graces the Executive Lobby of the main administration building. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Sir William for his invaluable gift to the Foundation.

I would like to express my gratitude to all of our

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Cypress Lawn Cemetery Association

Cypress Lawn is a 501 (c)(13) not for profit corporation established in 1892 by a group of prominent and responsible citizens, headed by Hamden Noble, determined to provide a decent cemetery for all creeds and races as well as “an attractive and pleasing place for meditation of the living.”

Today, over a hundred years later, Cypress Lawn stands as a testament

to the vision of these men when they proclaimed, “...in the fullness of time, the cemetery... will form an extensive park, rich in foliage, flowers, mausoleums, statuaries and other works of art... a handsome gift to posterity.”



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Restoration Spotlight: Cypress Lawn Arboretum

In March 2002, landscape architect and UC Berkeley Lecturer Emeritus Russell A. Beatty, ASLA, completed a Historic Landscape Report for Cypress Lawn Heritage Foundation.

This project was initiated to evaluate the cemetery’s historic landscape and to start a rehabilitation and management program to serve as a guide for both maintenance operations and future landscape design decisions. A parallel study was also conducted to inventory the trees within the landscape.

Mr. Beatty’s report documented the landscape history of Cypress Lawn to illustrate its uniqueness and significance as a late 19th century example of a rural cemetery as a means of preserving its historic character.

Mr. Beatty observed that the cemetery’s

“landscape is remarkably intact and quite beautiful” but that many trees and shrubs “are suffering from both age and inconsistent maintenance.” He presented guidelines in maintaining the cemetery’s rural garden character and recommended that the cemetery develop strategies for its protection, management and improvements. He noted that “in future changes and additions, the character of the historic landscape should be retained in plantings, and insofar as possible, in new structures.”

Vice President for Operations and Horticulture Michael Mathiasen and his staff embarked on this long-term project of restoration, preservation and maintenance in late 2007. For a start, one hundred eighty yew trees have been planted on the West Side which, for a long time had looked barren because of trees that have been lost over the years due age or to inclement weather. ❖



Left photo (1915) and right photo (2008) of the same area on Cypress Ave. at Cypress Lawn’s East side.

Who Am I?: Answers on Page 6

1. My business was one of the largest and most successful flower nurseries in San Mateo County. Built in 1894, this nursery continues to thrive under the management of my descendants. Who am I?
2. I was best known for discovering the dangers of nuclear radiation and for pioneering the field of nuclear medicine in the diagnosis and treatment of some forms of cancer and other diseases. Who am I?
3. I was one of California’s major petroleum entrepreneurs in the early years of the 20th century. Under my leadership, the General Petroleum Company became the largest owner of oil land in California. Who am I?
4. People referred to me as the “Wheat King” because I was California’s chief exporter of wheat to most parts of the globe. The town of Port Costa which I built on the Carquinez Strait was the principal wheat shipping point for the entire Pacific Coast. Who am I?

Patriotic Bronze Finds Permanent Home

It took some time for San Francisco long-time resident Sir William Fries II to find an appropriate home for his beloved bronze sculpture, Gloria Victis. Other major fine arts museums in the Bay Area have been patiently waiting in the wings for him to make his final decision.

In July of 2007, after a lot of careful thought, Sir William decided that the right place for his sculpture would be at Cypress Lawn, where his parents, his brother, and his grandfather are interred in the cemetery's Garden of Meditation.

The bronze sculpture had been in the family for over a hundred years and was handed down to him by his parents. He believes that the bronze was purchased by his parents when they resided in France in the early part of the 20th century. Sir William received his early education in Switzerland and France and graduated in political science from UC Berkeley.

Cast after the model exhibited at

the Paris Salon in 1874 by French sculptor Marius-Jean-Antonin Mercié (1845-1916), the sculpture is a winged female figure allegorical of Fame poised on one foot and clad in swirling draperies, carrying in her arms a dying almost nude young warrior still holding on to his broken sword, raised on a slight mound with an owl perching on a spray of laurel on a circular plinth inscribed GLORIA VICTIS.

Shortly after the Prussians invaded France in 1870, Mercié executed a group depicting the figure of Fame supporting a victorious soldier. After the surrender of France, he decided to alter his group, replacing the victorious soldier with a defeated patriot, thus transforming an allegory of Glory to the Victors into one of Glory to the Vanquished.

The original plaster model exhibited at the Paris Salon in 1874 won the Medaille D'honneur and established the young sculptor's reputation. The plaster model was purchased by



Photography by Peter Marcus

the City of Paris and was then cast in bronze by Victor Thiebaut. The original bronze now resides at the Hotel de Ville in Paris.

Sir William's donation to Cypress Lawn is one of a few bronze reductions from the Barbedienne Foundry. It stands on an Italian green serpentine marble statuary pedestal. ❖

Some Words of Appreciation...

Martin S. Jacobs



Martin S. Jacobs is Executive Vice President for Development of the Heritage Foundation. With his able leadership, the Foundation hopes to establish a development program that will provide additional resources to ensure that the legacy of Cypress Lawn and its pioneer families will be maintained as enduring treasures.

I want to thank everyone for the exceptional response to our Annual Appeal. Your gifts help ensure the continued educational mission of the Foundation and the preservation of Cypress Lawn as a place of beauty and one of the most important historic garden cemeteries. Please note that the Foundation also has various tax-advantaged Planned Giving options for you to consider.

For example, with a legacy gift from your estate,

you are making a promise to future generations that the beauty, history and enjoyment of Cypress Lawn will always live on. You can also make philanthropic gifts in kind like the breathtaking "Gloria Victis" bronze sculpture we have featured on this page. Your generosity will leave a legacy that will enrich the lives of generations to come.

I would also like to encourage you all to become more involved with the Heritage Foundation. If you enjoy our lectures, walking tours, and events, please spread the word. If there are ways we can make your experience with the Foundation more enjoyable, please let us know.

We always welcome fresh ideas, including suggestions for naming opportunities. I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at upcoming Foundation events.

I can be reached at 650.550-8892 to answer any questions.

Now, let's all enjoy Spring together. ❖

John McLaren: Boss Gardener

(Continued from page 1)

would swell to 400 during his long tenure. Using experience and direct observation, the shrewd and aggressive superintendent worked diligently to keep politics and commercialism out of the park. He was held in great esteem but was also considered hard to work for by some. "Wild game is coming" was the muffled cry when McLaren came to inspect his workers.

McLaren's landscaping philosophy was similar to Hall's: he wanted to create a natural look by working with nature, not against it. He was an experienced forester and horticulturist who studied the local climate and what would thrive in it. Still a dynamo when he reached his 70th birthday in 1916, he was granted a special honor.

With McLaren's mandatory retirement at hand, the board of supervisors passed special ordinances giving him lifetime tenure over the park. Blind at the end of his life, he relied on protégé Julius Girod to be his eyes. McLaren's work was not limited to Golden Gate Park but also included other emerging city parks and special events. He did landscaping for the 1915 Panama-Pacific

International Exposition and for the 1939 Golden Gate Exposition on Treasure Island.

In appreciation, a special day was set aside at the PPIE to honor McLaren for his design work, and two local newspapers presented him with an engraved loving cup (an ornamental vessel); some 4,000 San Franciscans had contributed as little as a few cents each toward the gift.

Other accolades for the indomitable, self-described "Boss Gardener" included the naming of an



"Boss Gardener" John Hays McLaren

avenue after him in the prestigious Seacliff District and the award of an honorary doctorate by the University of California at Berkeley. Upon his 80th birthday and his 40th year with the park, a 450-acre park in the Outer Mission was named after him. McLaren Lodge in Golden Gate Park honors his long-time contributions, and the East Bay's Tilden Park has a meadow named after him.

After his death in 1943, at age 96, McLaren's body lay in state in the San Francisco City Hall Rotunda, a tribute reserved for only a few San Franciscans. Later, the funeral cortege drove his casket through Golden Gate Park, also a special honor, as the park commission normally discouraged corteges from entering the park. His final resting place is, appropriately, the garden cemetery of Cypress Lawn in Colma.

Excerpt from San Francisco's Golden Gate Park: A Thousand and Seventeen Acres of Stories Portland: West Winds Press, copyright 2001, Christopher Pollock. John McLaren's photo courtesy of the author.

From the President's Desk

(Continued from page 1)

supporters who responded to our 2007 Annual Appeal. At the same time I welcome all new members of the Heritage Foundation. It is through your continued and unfailing support that we are able to provide our free monthly lectures and walking tours as well as other special events.

You will find the schedule for the lectures and walking tours for

this quarter on the first page of the Newsletter.

If you need the full schedule for our events for the year, please call Leni Panopio at the Heritage Foundation office at 650.550-8863.

I urge you all to join the Heritage Foundation and be a proud participant in the preservation of California's heritage. ❖

**Join the Cypress Lawn
Heritage Foundation**

**Preserve the Presence
of the Past**

650.550-8863

2007 Annual Fund Appeal

On behalf of the Cypress Lawn Heritage Foundation's Board of Directors and Staff we'd like to extend a resounding thank you to all our loyal friends who responded to our annual appeal. Your support is a tremendous boost towards our goal of preserving the many life stories and treasures found in the cemetery and in the fulfillment of our founder Hamden Noble's vision when he declared, ". . . In the fullness of time, the cemetery . . . will form an extensive park, rich in foliage, flowers, mausoleums, statuary and other works of art . . . a handsome gift to posterity."

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Answers: Who Am I? Questions on Page 2

1. **Edgar Wakeman McLellan**

(1867—1935): McLellan has the distinction of being the first person to settle in the town of Burlingame in San Mateo County where he built a very successful nursery business near the railroad depot. His Burlingame nursery had the largest glasshouse complex and was considered the most modern greenhouses on the West Coast. At the height of his success, he was called San Francisco's "Flower King." One of his sons, Rod, later moved the nursery to South San Francisco where he cultivated gardenias and later shifted the company's efforts to growing orchids. The company that Edgar McLellan established in 1884 still operates from Watsonville, California.
Section D Lot 27

2. **John H. Lawrence (1904—1991):**

Known as the "Founder of Nuclear Medicine," Lawrence founded the Donner Laboratory, the world's first research laboratory devoted to nuclear medicine. While his older brother Ernest Lawrence, recipient of the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1939 and founder of the Lawrence Livermore Laboratories concentrated on research in physics, John focused on medical research conducting experiments in radioactive phosphorous, including the development of modern nuclear medicine used to treat several forms of cancer. Both brothers were scientific collaborators and leaders in their specialties. John Lawrence was a graduate of Harvard Medical School and was an instructor in medicine at

Yale University. He later followed his brother to the University of California Berkeley where he experimented with the mysterious new products of the cyclotron which his brother Ernest developed. California's Governor Ronald Reagan appointed John Lawrence to the UC Board of Regents in 1970 and he served until 1983.
Section L Lot 6

3. **John Barneson (1862-1941):** Born in Scotland, Capt. Barneson was raised in Sydney, Australia and began his career as an apprentice seaman on a "tea clipper" at the age of fourteen. Rising rapidly, he became a First Officer at the age of 20 and sailed into San Francisco for the first time. He received his Captain's papers in London in 1883. He was placed in charge of an English clipper running in the Pacific trade. In 1890 he retired from the sea and settled on Puget Sound and joined government service transporting soldiers to the Insular possessions of the United States during the Spanish-American War. In 1900, Captain Barneson resigned from his post and moved to San Francisco. At this time, the oil business was flourishing in California and he became affiliated with the General Petroleum Company, one of the largest and most important group of organizations in the oil business. Together with Captain William Matson, they built the first pipeline in California, from the Coalinga fields located in the heart of California to the coastal town of Monterey, California.
Catacombs Unit 3

**Cypress Lawn
Heritage Foundation**
A non-profit 501 (c)(3) corporation
dedicated to promoting Cypress Lawn Cemetery
as a rich historical and educational resource
for the Bay Area Community

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The *CLHF Newsletter*
is a quarterly publication of the
Cypress Lawn Heritage Foundation

Leni D. Panopio
Managing Editor

1370 El Camino Real
Colma, California 94014-3239

4. **George Washington McNear**

(1830 - 1909): McNear was born in Washington, Maine, coming from a hardy race of seagoing men. At the age of 15, he went to sea, made several voyages in foreign lands and along the Atlantic Coast and then landed in New Orleans where he became part owner and the master of a steamboat plying the waters of Mississippi Sound and Lake Pont Chartrain. In 1860 he sold his interest and went to California where he joined his brother as a grain merchant. He withdrew his partnership with his brother a few years later and established his own business and became the leading shipper of grains to Europe and other parts of the world on the Pacific Coast. At one point his warehouses had a storage capacity of more than eight million bushels of grain. Section L Lot 2 ❖

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