

Fall, 2007

# NEWS *from* OAK HILL

*The Newsletter of the Friends of Oak Hill Cemetery*

## 2007 The Year of Maintenance

Roadwork accomplished this past August started by milling away up to a foot of old tar, stone chip and recycled asphalt to reach just below the edge of cobblestone gutters installed from the middle of the 19th century onward as the terraced paths and carriage ways of Oak Hill were created. Often the gutter was completely filled with turf or asphalt and had to be uncovered by precisely operated small “Bob-Cat” loaders or, in many cases, by hand. The milling machine, having cut only one half the width of the roadway on its first pass now returned to finish removal of old material and reshape the outside edge of the road. After power sweeping the gutters and a final grading and rolling of the exposed roadway base, paving could begin. A smooth 2 1/2 inch deep layer of hot asphalt was spread in one pass. An unusual amount of handwork was required to ensure that the new surface would closely meet the irregular edge of the stone gutters and, on the other side of the road, be sharply terminated and compacted at its unconstrained outside edge. Rolling the new work was equally exacting and produced the final smooth flat surface required to send rain water to the gutters thus minimizing side slope erosion.



*Workers from Lorton Contracting Co. rebuilding the cobblestone gutters on the Ellipse.*

Since the reshaped pavement now meets the gutters without a sharp drop-off and because the cobble stones can support the weight of sedans, SUVs and pick-up trucks, most drivers have gained from one and a half to three feet of usable roadway width over almost all of the new work. In some areas the gutters had been damaged by installation of 20<sup>th</sup> century water, electric and gas lines and in a few spots by falling trees or root growth. Some 100 feet of cobblestone work was completely replaced

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## Superintendent's Report

If you have not been into the cemetery since mid-August, you will be pleasantly surprised. Between August 22nd-30th, Chamberlain Contractors, Inc. paved the Ellipse/Chapel area and the worst part of the North Hill road. Pictures in the newsletter speak volumes as to the improvements made. I never thought I would think of paving as a thing of beauty, but I do now. It is also a thing of great expense- \$167,000 for this first increment.

Many of you in the affected areas received letters from Mr. Gill seeking donations to defray the costs. We received contributions from about 25% of you, and we are grateful that you made an extra gift in addition to the newsletter contribution. I do urge you, however, to increase your yearly donation and designate it "for roads". Another \$200,000 will be needed to complete all areas of the cemetery.

Another area vastly improved is the drive-in gate entrance. Board member George G. Hill funded its re-construction. What a difference.

The cemetery incurred more expense when all cremation steps constructed prior to the year 2000 had to be re-pointed. To say we are disappointed with the company which constructed those steps would be an understatement. It is no longer active in the District.

For those of you who contribute to the Friends of Oak Hill, your donations were used to have major tree work done at Reno Hill. We thinned the canopy there for the second time to ensure that we could get more grass and plant material to grow to stem erosion.

I appreciate the compliments you gave me regarding my summer newsletter report. I continue to enjoy and cherish my time here.

With best wishes for 2008,

Ella S. Pozell  
Superintendent

## From the President

Since the publication of our summer newsletter, we have completed almost all work on the chapel. All that remains is the removal of the Lexan from the Rose Window and its repair.

There is still a great deal of paving to do, but we are pleased with the first increment in which we created 3 parking spaces at the entrance which are in great demand. We have much more to do, and a roadway remains closed to vehicular traffic because it is too treacherous.

In connection with the paving, we have re-laid 100 feet of the cobblestone gutter around the ellipse. It now looks as it did 150 years ago.

Income is always a big problem, and we are soliciting additional funds from lot holders whose lots are in the affected areas. Twenty-five percent of the recipients responded for a donation total of \$68,700. As we continue the process, many more

of you will be called upon to contribute, and the Board of Managers and I hope you will be able to make a generous contribution.

We owe very special thanks to Mr. Al Wheeler who has encouraged the board to make this important start on road repair for the past two years and, more importantly, has supported the effort with the largest donation to date.

We are all very concerned about the affect the drought has had on the trees. Only time will tell as to how many more we might lose as a result. We, of course, watered when and where we could, but many are stressed.

I hope you will come and see us as the cemetery soon to see what has been done. Remember the cemetery walk-in gate is open on Sundays from 1-4 PM, weather permitting.

John W. Gill  
President

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**Maintenance**

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along the front edge of the ellipse and at the north end of the Pinkney memorial path where the worst conditions existed. Several other sections, though functioning, are in need of rebuilding: notably at the south end of the Pinkney memorial path and at the beginning of Chapel Avenue from the Stefan Osusky memorial down past the very lovely Keck memorial. New gutters cost about \$125 per running foot. We hope donors will come forward to enable these two sections and perhaps others of a donor's choice to be repaired.

I have not dwelt on the difficulties of preparing and then paving our roads. Suffice to say, it required very careful planning and execution on the contractor's part and expert equipment operation plus unusually thoughtful manual labor by his thoroughly professional crew. Experience counted and they had it. Chamberlain's president Dan Shaw and their vice president of operations Joe Hart worked closely with us to understand cemetery conditions, the scope of work desired and our three objectives of improved drainage, increased useable width and a "funeral" smooth, flat finished surface. It seemed that we had the pick of their fleet of equipment and the best workers in each specialty. I look forward to future contact with them all.

I have also not mentioned the difficulty of the gutter reconstruction work done by Lorton Construction Company under the direction of their Operations Manager Mark Sanders. Our cobbled gutters were built to a 19<sup>th</sup> century design requiring lots of very skilled labor and virtually excluding use of modern machinery. The technique involves controlling the slope of the centerline of the gutter rather precisely as well as meeting the surface of the adjacent road on one side and irregular grassed terrain on the other. Large stones should be used on each side and blended with other sizes placed down to

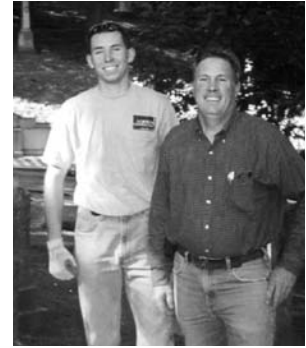
the controlled centerline grade. It is what one might call a lost art – recovered rather well by an outstanding journeyman mason on Mark's staff. The same mason built the new bridge across the gutter at the foot of the Chapel Terraced Niches and replaced some heavy stone slabs at the 30<sup>th</sup> Street gate which were inadvertently crushed by a very heavy road milling machine. We were fortunate Lorton Construction was already working on site and could quickly follow behind Chamberlain's repaving crews.

The other work recently completed by Lorton Construction was to refurbish, repair and in some cases rebuild almost 400 running feet of stone side walls flanking seven flights of terraced niches built by another contractor some few years ago. The job had to be performed with great care to protect memorial steps while replacing adjacent decayed field stone, re-pointing masonry joints and re-supporting some stone veneer.

Finally, Lorton has re-set the most dangerous stone steps and landings of one of the long pathways which descend from East Gate Avenue through the amphitheater to the camelback bridge. We hope to reset the companion east pathway in 2008.

Through the projects described above, the board has made a bold start on an extensive backlog of maintenance and hopes to inspire more generous donations to continue the work. You are now able to see just how dramatically roads, gutters, stairways and walks can be restored and improved.

David C. de Vicq  
Vice President



*Mark Sanders of Lorton Contracting Co. and son, Zachary, finish stone work.*

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**Contributions to Oak Hill Cemetery**  
*as of November 27, 2007*

*Beautification Fund*

The Rev. Mark S. Anschutz  
Mr. & Mrs. Edgar H. Brenner  
Mrs. Nicholas Barton de Bodisco  
Mrs. Jeanne E. Foote  
Mrs. Jan Hendler  
Mrs. Virginia Jenkins  
Mr. & Mrs. James G. Kerkam  
Mr. Jack Masey  
The Neel Foundation  
Mr. Gerald O'Brien  
Mr. David M. Petrou  
Prof. & Mrs. Daniel N. Robinson  
Mr. Philip Sandifer  
Mrs. Judith Strassburger

Ms. Deirdre O'Hara – *in honor of*  
*Hilary O'Hara*  
Ms. Hilary O'Hara – *in honor of*  
*Deirdre O'Hara*  
Mrs. George H. Revercomb  
– *in memory of Nan Cornell*  
*Rehnquist*

*General Fund*

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Ms. Marion G. Arkin  
Ms. Karen Beall & Mr. Dale  
Haworth  
Mrs. Kathleen Behr  
Mrs. Laura H. Belman  
Mr. W. G. Blount  
Mr. & Mrs. Charles D. Bodson  
Mr. & Mrs. Mario H. Boiardi  
Mr. & Mrs. Dean K. Brenneman  
Mr. & Mrs. Edgar Brenner  
Mr. Charles E. Burr, Jr.  
Mr. Peter T. Burr  
Ms. Elizabeth A. Burton  
Mrs. Dorothea J. Capello  
Mr. Nathaniel S. Clifford  
Mr. Hal S. Curry  
Mr. Robert L. Dale  
Mrs. Nancy B. Dill

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Mr. & Mrs. Chester W. Dunham  
Mrs. Patricia A. Edmonds  
Mr. & Mrs. Edward L. Emes  
Mrs. William Sharon Farr, Jr.  
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Ms. Mary Ann Foster  
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Mr. & Mrs. Stephen H. Gamble  
Mrs. Amelia R. Gardner  
Mr. James M. Gassaway  
Mrs. Lee S. Gentemann  
Mr. T. Nicholas Gill  
Mr. C. R. Grant  
Ms. Clarice E. Hacker  
Mr. & Mrs. Henry F. Harding  
Dr. Elizabeth R. Hatcher  
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Mr. & Mrs. Maurice Heartfield, III  
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Mr. John F. Jameson  
Mr. Stephen M. Jarboe  
Mrs. Claudia Stone Johnsen  
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Amb. Robert B. Keating  
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Ms. Margaret MacLeod  
Ms. Joan A. Madden  
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Mr. Charles Saltzman  
Mr. William W. Scales  
Mrs. Margaret Gill Schaake  
Mr. T. Franklin Schneider  
Mr. James W. Shields  
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Mr. McKelden Smith  
Mrs. Samuel Spencer  
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Mrs. Betty B. Taylor  
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Mrs. Eric Weinmann  
Mr. George C. Werth

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Ms. Elaine Zecher  
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Mrs. Elizabeth Edgeworth – *in memory of Sue Kirkpatrick*  
Mrs. Alan L. Emlen – *in memory of T. J. Duncan Fuller*  
Mrs. Lelee Frank Hazard – *in memory of Elene E. Gill*  
Mr. & Mrs. Nathaniel Hynson – *in memory of the Hynsons & Tiffeys*  
Mr. John Peters Ireland – *in memory of James Kennedy Ireland*  
Mr. John Kilcoyne – *in memory of the Albert E. Berry family*  
Mrs. George H. Revercomb – *in memory of Mariana M. Grove*  
Mrs. Robert W. Root – *in memory of Christine Heartfield West*  
Ms. Sarah Owens Selby – *in memory of Ellen O. Warfield*  
Ms. Sarah Owens Selby – *in memory of Christine Heartfield West*  
Ms. Gail R. Schonbeck – *in memory of Hudson & Patricia Moses*  
Mr. E. Tillman Stirling – *in memory of William Calhoun Stirling, III*  
Mr. Bardyl R. Tirana – *in memory of Mrs. John W. Gill*  
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Van Ess – *in memory of Nathan Loughborough*  
Mrs. Ann Webster – *in memory of Niki Warfield*  
Mr. John F. Weiler – *in honor of Wes Pippenger*

*Roads*

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Mr. & Mrs. Louis R. Cohen  
Mrs. Bartholomew Cox  
Mr. George D. Crowley, Jr.  
Mrs. Helen W. Curtin  
Ms. Suzanne Dale  
Mr. & Mrs. Calvin Davison  
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Mr. & Mrs. W. Leslie Douglas  
Mr. & Mrs. Martin R. Dunetz  
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Mr. & Mrs. Steven H. Flajser  
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Mr. Maurice K. Heartfield, Jr.  
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Mr. and Mrs. Henry C. Holle  
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Mr. & Mrs. Gary N. Horlick.  
Ms. Sherrill M. Houghton  
Mr. & Mrs. Henry C. Ikenberry  
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Mr. & Mrs. Mark R. Joelson  
Ms. Linda R. Kenyon  
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Mr. & Mrs. Timothy King  
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Mrs. Norma Leonard  
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Mr. and Mrs. Porter Lewis  
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Melrod Family Charitable Foundation  
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Prof. & Mrs. Daniel Robinson  
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Mrs. Alexandra Totten  
Mrs. Judith Ray Van Dyke  
Mr. James A. Van Sweden  
Count & Countess Wilhelm Wachtmeister  
Mr. William L. Walde  
Mr. George C. Werth  
Al Wheeler, Esq.  
J. Randolph Wilson, Esq.

Mrs. Diana D. Ferris – *in memory of Elene E. Gill*  
Mr. John W. Gill – *in memory of Elene Gill*  
Dr. & Mrs. Thomas L. Poore – *in memory of Dorothy Henning*  
Mrs. George H. Revercomb – *in memory of Elene E. Gill*

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***Cemetery Hours***

Office and grounds: 9:00 am to 4:30 pm, M-F, closed Saturdays and National Holidays. Sunday (grounds only) 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm, weather permitting. Please observe rules posted at gate.

***Board of Managers***

John W. Gill, *President*  
David C. de Vicq, *Vice President*  
Wesley E. Pippenger, *Secretary*  
George G. Hill, *Treasurer*  
Ella S. Pozell, *Superintendent*

***We need your help.*** If you currently reside in an apartment or townhouse, please contact us with your correct "Zip+4" number. This will help ensure that you continue to receive our mailings.

***Cemetery Publications***

Available in the cemetery office

***"Oak Hill Cemetery"***

A brief history – contains a map of the cemetery, list of notable people buried in Oak Hill and a brief history of our founding. \$3.00

***Oak Hill Note Cards***

Set of eight note cards featuring four scenes of Oak Hill Cemetery through the seasons. Envelopes included. \$5.00

***"Oak Hill Cemetery, Georgetown, DC  
Monument Inscriptions and  
Burial Data"***

Two volume set. \$150.00

**OAK HILL CEMETERY**

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Telephone: 202-337-2835 • Fax: 202-337-6481  
[www.oakhillcemeterydc.org](http://www.oakhillcemeterydc.org)

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