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## Twenty Years of Tours

# Valentine Guides Share Hollywood History with Visitors

It's mid-February, but longtime tour guide Kathryn Whittington is already thinking about spring. Standing near one of her favorite vistas on Hollywood's Ellis Road, she spread out her hands before her, like a movie director, imagining the drama to come.

"There will be a gorgeous massing of color of azaleas, dogwood, magnolia, and every color of crepe myrtle – pink, purple, lavender, and dark red," she said.

The beauty of the setting is "not an accidental work of nature. It's a very cultivated environment," she added. Richmond's rural garden cemetery park was designed in the English Landscape Garden style by John Notman of Philadelphia. "He was one of the premier architects of the 19th century," she said, noting that his many impressive designs include Laurel Hill Cemetery, a rural cemetery in Philadelphia; the Virginia's Capitol Square Grounds; and numerous buildings for Princeton University.

Whittington will discuss Notman's landscape design, biographies of "notable tenants," and symbolism in the artworks when the walking tour season begins again in April. She is one of nine guides affiliated with the Valentine who offer the approximately 2 hour, 2-mile tours of Hollywood. The guides brought 1,164 visitors through the cemetery's gates in 2018. Five dollars from each ticket sale goes to support Friends of Hollywood Cemetery and its restoration

and preservation efforts.

"Hollywood has had a great partnership with the Valentine which trains and has provided tour guides for Hollywood for almost 20 years," said David Gilliam, general manager of Hollywood Cemetery. "With an ever-increasing number of tourists, Hollywood had to develop a plan to manage the tourism aspect of the cemetery."

"People love the tours," he added. "Some people who complete the tour will then venture back out into the cemetery to see even more."

### Valentine History Tours Begin

The Valentine's History Tours program in Richmond began in 2000 but was preceded by tours offered by the Historic Richmond Foundation (where Whittington previously worked) and other entities. Historic Richmond offered a bus tour and afternoon walking tours.

As befitting a program connected to a history museum, the Valentine tours are designed to be in-depth and comprehensive. Twenty guides, who are part-time employees of the Valentine, conduct tours around the City.

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## Hollywood Guides (continued)

Interested guides must first undergo training through the museum's Richmond Academy. The program begins with six weeks of Sunday afternoon classroom sessions, for five hours each, which thoroughly cover Richmond's history through the ages. Once they complete the class work, the students undertake an apprenticeship with an experienced guide.

"It's a very rigorous program," said Bill Martin, director of the Valentine. "We think Richmond's history is fairly complex, and for a visitor coming to Richmond today, we want them to get the full range of stories about the city. Our tours are about both our best and our worst moments. There are some difficult topics, and we don't shy away from them"

"But the longest-running, and the most popular tour, has always been Hollywood Cemetery," he said. The reason: "It's this unique combination of the landscape, the art, and the stories of the people who are buried there."

### Stories from Hollywood Guides

Retired American History teacher Sandy Eberhard



Visitors pause to learn from Valentine guide LeAnn Hensche about one of Hollywood's most interesting residents, twice elected Governor of Virginia – William "Extra Billy" Smith.

finds much to talk about with visitors to the cemetery. "You can do the Civil War, the Spanish American War, and bring it on up to almost current events. There's a lot of history in the 135 acres," she said.

She enjoys meeting "all kinds of people from all walks of life and all countries," as well as many locals, on the tours. Many share humorous observations. When she stops in front of the statue of Confederate President Jefferson Davis, alert visitors often point out the name on a large family tombstone nearby. "Somebody will turn to me and say, 'And there's Grant.'"

Some visitors are pleasantly surprised to learn that Hollywood is still an active cemetery, with lots, crypts and niches for sale.

Others are stunned by the abundance of hills and can find it somewhat challenging, said tour guide Martha Davidson. By contrast, "a lot of the Europeans [from more walking-oriented cultures] are not even winded going through the cemetery."

Davidson was especially moved by one visitor. "I had a woman come through who was almost completely blind, and she came with an aide. It was fascinating to see. She would touch things, and I would describe what they looked like," Davidson said. The guest enjoyed the tour and thanked her afterwards. "It gave me a great deal of pleasure."

### Personal Highlights

From April to October, the guides offer daily walking tours of the cemetery. Every day, there is a "Highlights of Hollywood" tour which covers such well-known areas as Presidents Circle, the soldier's section, the Ginter Mausoleum, the black dog statue, and many others.

*(continued on page 3)*

## Hollywood Guides (continued)

Each guide designs their own “Highlights” tour, and some offer specially themed tours as well. For instance, on Mother’s Day (May 12th), LeAnn Hensche will offer a “Notable Women of Hollywood” tour. Along with Richmonders like Mary-Cooke Branch Munford, Grace Arents and Ellen Glasgow, she discusses the achievements of lesser-known women, such as those who instigated the burial of 3,000 Confederate dead from Gettysburg and the construction of the 90’ tall granite pyramid memorial.



*Valentine guide Kathryn Whittington explains the symbolic carving on the vault of Patrick Wilkie Brown, M.D. The iconographic design is the earliest used by America’s Freemasons.*

Hensche designed the tour a few years ago, after feeling that the women of Hollywood had been given short shrift in books and tours. “So, my tour, which I give twice a year, focuses on women with the occasional reference to men,” she said.

Like the other guides, she enjoys the endless opportunities for education offered by the cemetery.

“There’s so much history and symbolism and beauty. I think all the tour guides are sort of smitten

with Hollywood because you’re always learning something,” she said. “There are 80,000 stories...or maybe even more.”

### *2019 Tour Offerings*

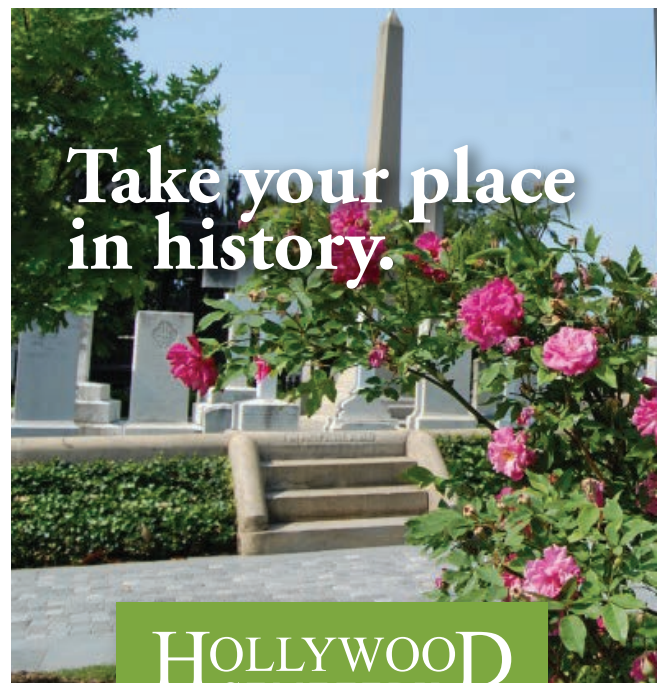
#### **Highlights of Hollywood Cemetery**

Monday-Saturday, April – October, 10:00am – Noon

#### **Sunday Hollywood Special Topic Tours**

Second Sunday, April – October, 2:00-4:00 p.m.

**Prices:** Adults \$15, Valentine Members \$5,  
Children (under 18) Free



Lots, crypts, & cremation niches are available throughout 135 acres of scenic hills, stately trees and architectural beauty. Contact us for an appointment.

**Public Visiting Hours**  
8am - 6pm daily

**Historic Walking Tours**  
April-October

412 South Cherry Street  
Richmond, VA 23220  
804.648.8501  
info@hollywoodcemetery.org

[www.hollywoodcemetery.org](http://www.hollywoodcemetery.org)

## *Tree Digitization Project “Off and Running”*

When Mike Van Yahres wants to analyze the condition of the trees in Hollywood Cemetery, he enters a few search terms in his laptop and a vibrant photo fills the screen. “You can see all the trees in the cemetery, color coded according to their condition,” he said, excitedly.

His ability to evaluate Hollywood’s trees at a glance is made possible through innovative software, purchased following the successful completion of Friends of Hollywood’s Environmental Stewardship Project campaign in Spring 2018.

Since last year, “approximately 2,000 trees have been inventoried and assessed, with a digital record made for each one,” said Van Yahres, owner of the Van Yahres Tree Company of Charlottesville, which has managed the cemetery’s trees since 1994.

In the past, he had to undertake an annual inventory of the cemetery’s trees using a more time-consuming method--filling out a spreadsheet by hand, then entering the data into a computer. Now, he can zoom in to see individual trees or change the search terms to see a color coding of the different species or what the canopy will look like in the future.

### **Push Button Searches**

“With the push of a button, hundreds of queries can be answered. It’s going to make everything much more efficient, much more accurate,” he said.

As part of its digital record, each tree in the cemetery receives a rating based on such factors such as its condition, location, and desirability of species. This allows Van Yahres to prioritize his maintenance work.

“The more important trees will receive the highest level of attention,” he said. “A high importance tree in a good location will receive care every three years, a tree of medium importance will be worked on probably every five years, and a less important tree, every seven years.”

Of course, he’s always on the lookout for trees that receive storm or other damage. “The first priority in managing trees is safety,” he said.

The software is popular among governmental agencies and municipalities. “We did a lot of research and, when you have to manage a large number of trees, this is the finest program in the country right now,” he said. Van Yahres worked closely with the company to customize the software to the cemetery’s needs.

He’s experimented with the various queries, including exploring the shade provided by the trees. “We will be able to statistically determine what the trees’ decline and mortality will be over the next 50 or 100 years. And then, in response to that, we can make a new tree planting plan that anticipates the change of the urban forest,” he said. “That operation—anticipating tree decline and responding with tree planting—is pretty much singular. I haven’t seen anybody else doing that.”

### **Generous Funding**

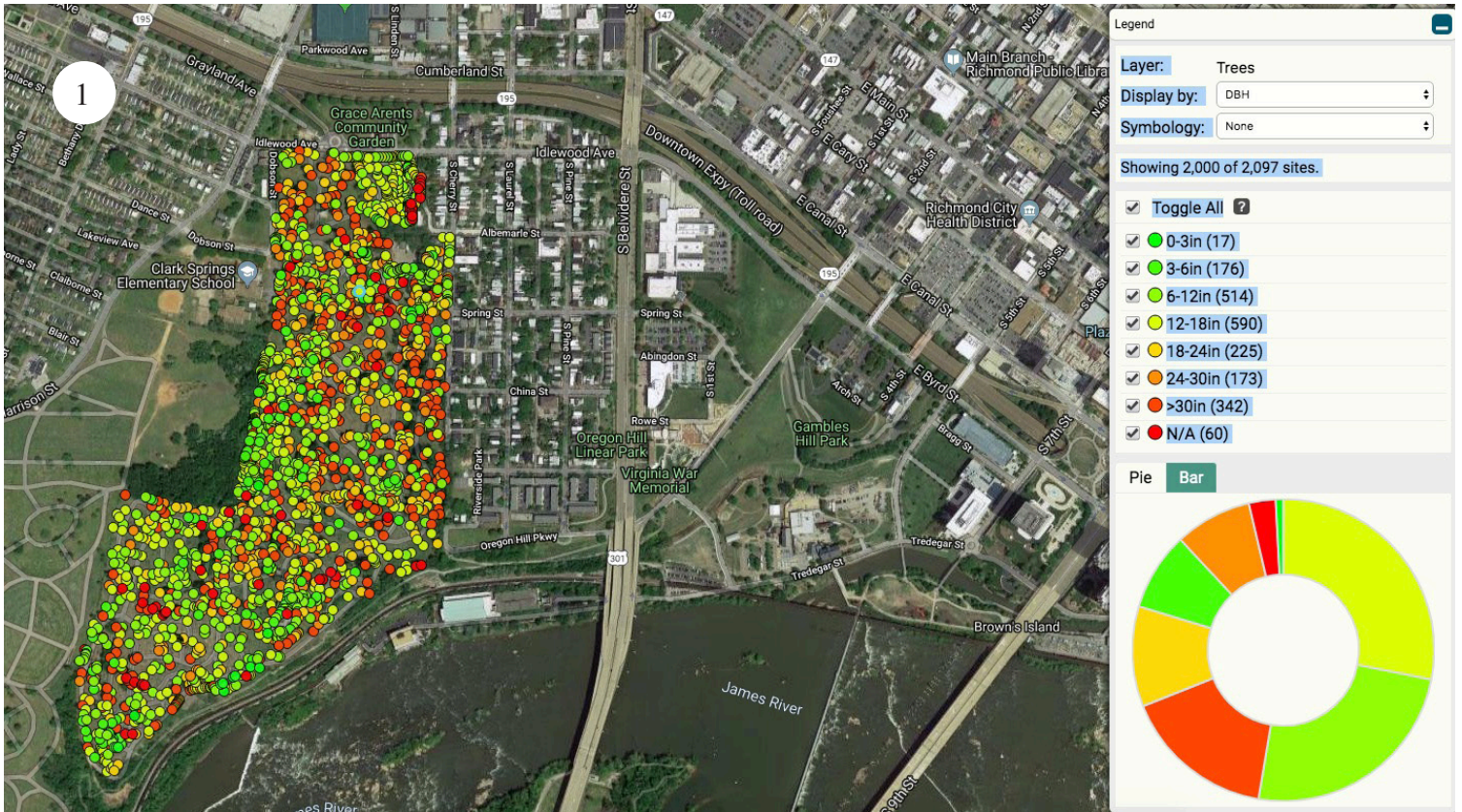
To complete the campaign, Friends of Hollywood Cemetery raised over \$150,000 necessary to receive a matching grant from the Mary Morton Parsons Foundation. Additional grants were received from Dominion Energy and the Richard S. Reynolds Foundations. The funding will also support \$50,000 in tree replacement and planting, along with lightning protection on monarch and other important trees. While many of those trees already have the protection, it must be monitored for wear and tear and extended when the trees grow, said Van Yahres.

The arborist is impressed with how quickly the funding was raised. “I was surprised, because we talked about this subject with enthusiasm, but the funding was always the question mark,” he said. “Friends did a remarkable job in securing funding--and now we’re off and running.”

### ***Photographs on Opposite Page:***

***1. Van Yahres Tree Company has mapped and recorded the maintenance needs of over 2,000 trees in the Cemetery. In this image, the colors represent each tree’s DBH (diameter at breast height) from 3” to over 30”***

***2. At over 87” DBH, this Sycamore is one of the most important trees in the Cemetery. All of its features and maintenance needs are recorded***



Photos

2

01/30/2019

1548873887683-1548873884078171122665790952856.jpg

Tree Details - 2188

Close View Photos

Tree	Location	Management	Risk Assessment	Monarch	Work History
Tree Id					
Common Name	Tulip tree				
Latin Name	Liriodendron tulipifera				
DBH	87				
DBH Range	>30in				
Tree Protection Zone (TPZ)	87				
Critical Root Zone (CRZ)	43.5				
Status	Alive				
Tour Tree	Tree Tour				
Section ID	M				
Tree Tag Number	1,331				
Condition	2 - Good				
Crown Spread	100				
Observations-Characteristics	Cavity, Co-dominant Limbs, Crack, Deadwood, Lightning Protection - Repair				
Observations-Biotic Pest					
Observations-Abiotic					
Observation Comments					
Photos	Photos				

## Founder of Sheltering Arms Hospital

# Remembering Rebekah Dulaney Peterkin

*In the latter part of the 19th century, a minister's daughter convinced her church sewing circle to undertake a grand dream: to create the first free hospital for the poor in Richmond.*

At an early age, Rebekah Dulaney Peterkin felt a deep concern for those less fortunate. She was born September 24, 1847, in Berryville, Va., the youngest of three children of Rev. Joshua Peterkin and his wife, Elizabeth. Growing up with her siblings George and Mary in Richmond, where her father was the rector of St. James's Episcopal Church, she saw firsthand the sufferings of those affected by the Civil War. She and her mother worked in local hospitals, caring for injured soldiers.

As families recovered from the devastation of the war, they faced other challenges. By the latter part of the 19th century, Richmond had emerged as an industrial hub with the arrival of railroads and the founding of companies such as Albemarle Paper Co., tobacco giants like Allen & Ginter, and Tredegar Iron Works. The growth of factories led to an increase in industrial accidents, which greatly concerned Peterkin.

In 1887, she persuaded her sewing circle to form the first Richmond chapter of the Order of King's Daughters, a national charitable organization that had been started the year before by church women in New York City. Peterkin led the new chapter, called the Central Circle.

"Rebekah was considered a woman of rare personal charm and intelligence. She was determined to establish a hospital for the 'respectable poor' in the area of downtown Richmond. Her patients would be men and women who could not work for reasons of ill health, yet neither could they afford medical care," says Anne Rutherford Lower, in her book, *Sheltering Arms Hospital: A Centennial History (1889-1989)*. "Her vision was to help the weakest of them—the poor, injured or sick—regain their health, their jobs, and their self-respect."



*Rebekah Dulaney Peterkin  
(1847 – 1891)*

### *The beginnings of Sheltering Arms*

Along with the women in her circle, Peterkin engaged local physicians--among them, Dr. Edwin Gilliam Booth, who owned the Clifton House (built around 1778). He let her rent the old boarding house for an amazing price: free the first year, \$5 per year thereafter.

Located at 107 N. 14th Street, the once-fashionable Clifton House needed significant cleaning and repair. According to Lower, the young women of Central Circle mopped the floors and scrubbed the walls, "begged funds and supplies from friends and made the first blankets by sewing newspapers between yellow cotton covers." Under their loving care, Sheltering Arms opened on February 13, 1889. [The year before, Peterkin's brother, George, who had become the first Episcopal bishop in West Virginia, had opened a charitable hospital of the same name in that state.]

Physician Dr. Moses Hoge, Jr. volunteered his services to the Richmond hospital. During the first year, the hospital managed to hold patient costs to about 67 cents a day. One of the patients, a little lame girl named Bettie Ellett, brought in by Peterkin, "became the beloved 'daughter' of the Hospital and remained living there until her death twenty-nine years later," says Lower.

Funds were always scarce, and the circle found ways to be thrifty. Over the years, they convinced more physicians and surgeons to volunteer their time. The doctors even brought in their own instruments and pitched in to paint rooms and clean up the grounds. The women set up a lunch room on the first floor, using the profits to help support the hospital.



*Clifton House at 107 14th Street, Richmond  
(circa 1889)  
(the first home of Sheltering Arms Hospital)*

### *Tragedy strikes*

Just two years in, as the hospital was beginning to take off, Rebekah Peterkin died suddenly in Cambridge, Maryland, on July 26, 1891, at the age of 43. Peterkin's father was from Baltimore, so it is possible she was visiting family in the area. In the burial ledger book for Hollywood Cemetery, her cause of death is listed as "blood poisoning," which is now known as sepsis. The condition can arise from an infection and, in severe cases, can quickly become life-threatening. While today it is treated with iv fluids and antibiotics, Peterkin would not have benefited from the latter. The first antibiotic, penicillin, was not discovered until 1929.

The city greatly mourned her death. "Miss Rebecca (sic) Peterkin was a lovely life in the sight of man and God, and a benison to the suffering and unfortunate. Her daily walks were sanctified by charity of thought and act, and her example shed

## ***Rebekah Dulaney Peterkin (continued)***

along the pathway of all who knew her the lights that is in the Master's," says a reporter in the *Richmond Dispatch* of July 28, 1891.

Her remains were transported by train to Richmond, and the funeral was held on July 29 at St. James's Episcopal Church. Peterkin was interred at her family's plot in Hollywood Cemetery, at the corner of Haxall and Western Avenues, where her sister, who died at the age of 14, was previously laid to rest.

At Peterkin's funeral, a gentleman remarked to the *Richmond Dispatch* that "the saddest sight during the ceremonies was when the poor, crippled girl was carried into the church, whom Miss Peterkin had nursed with the greatest care ever since she had been an inmate of the Sheltering Arms as if she had been her own child." The young guest, presumably, was Bettie Ellett.

While the observer sympathized with the Peterkin family, he said, "I do not think that they are to be pitied as much as the poor people of our city, who henceforth will miss the numerous acts of charity administered to them by Miss Rebekah Peterkin during her lifetime."

The story of Sheltering Arms did not end, however, as dedicated individuals sought to continue her good work. Peterkin's mother, for instance, played a significant role in the hospital's development, including serving for 10 years as the president of the executive board.

"She's an important part of the story. Rebekah Peterkin gets a ton of credit, but God bless her mother for continuing her legacy forward," said John L. "Mac" McElroy III, president of the Sheltering Arms Foundation.

### ***Changing times***

To address the hospital's expanding needs, a group of doctors led by Dr. Hunter H. McGuire bought a Georgian mansion at 1008 E. Clay Street, which became the new site for Sheltering Arms Hospital in November 1894. The hospital later built a 53-bed facility on Palmyra Avenue, on the grounds of Richmond Memorial Hospital, in January 1965.

However, "with the arrival of Medicare and Medicaid, suddenly the relevance of a free hospital was diminished," said McElroy. "It was at that time that leadership, including some devoted board members, evaluated the needs in the community and determined that rehab care was lacking."

In January 1981, Sheltering Arms converted from an acute care hospital to the state's first comprehensive private freestanding physical rehabilitation hospital.

### ***Today and Tomorrow***

Today, Sheltering Arms offers comprehensive inpatient care at its main Hanover facility and at St. Francis Hospital. Patients receive specialty outpatient care at 10 satellite clinics across metropolitan Richmond. Last year, patients took part in over 140,000 outpatient and other visits at Sheltering Arms. From Peterkin's original staff of two, the hospital has blossomed to a full- and part-time staff of 550.

While much has changed over the years, the hospital continues to help those in need—providing over \$3 million each year in uncompensated services—through donations to its nonprofit

Sheltering Arms Foundation.

The Foundation is in the midst of a capital campaign to help create the \$95 million Sheltering Arms Institute – a joint venture with VCU Health. Sheltering Arms will close its aging, hospital-based units and open a new 114-bed, 212,000 square foot facility at West Broad Street and Route 288 in 2020.

What would Rebekah Peterkin think if she walked into Sheltering Arms today?

While she certainly would recognize the dedication of the health care providers and the volunteers, as for the medical advances, "I think she would be absolutely stunned," McElroy said, with a laugh.



*Peterkin Monument – Hollywood Cemetery*

*The author gratefully acknowledges Anne Rutherford Lower's excellent book, which served as a resource for this article, as well as the assistance of Mabel Toney of Hollywood Cemetery.*

# Peterkin Recognized at Founder's Day Service

On February 13, Sheltering Arms Hospital and Foundation held a service at the graveside of Rebekah Peterkin to celebrate their founder on the date of the hospital's 130th anniversary. Braving chilly weather, volunteers and staff placed flower arrangements at Peterkin's grave and the gated entrance to her family plot, where her parents and sister are also buried.

Dr. Gloria Flowers, chaplain at Sheltering Arms, delivered the invocation and the hospital's president

and CEO Mary Zweifel recognized Peterkin for her "formidable tenacity." Board chair Dianne Jewell discussed the hospital's continual movement "onward"—a term of encouragement frequently used to close board meetings.

Among those in attendance was John L. "Mac" McElroy III, president of the Sheltering Arms Foundation. As the hospital moves forward, "I think it is instructive and inspirational to look to our history and to somebody like Rebekah Peterkin as a guide star."



## 2019

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## 2019

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Woodrow C. Harper – Assistant General  
Manager  
Mabel E. Toney – Administrative Assistant  
Kristina Coonley – Assistant  
Cheryl Knaut – Assistant



# Q&A with William Oakes, Hollywood's New Conservator

In April 2018, Hollywood Cemetery hired its first full-time conservator, William Oakes. After graduating with a B.A. in History from VCU in 2011, he was hired as an intern by Robert Mosko, a Pennsylvania conservator, and eventually became the leader of a team of interns that worked in every section of the cemetery. They took part in the restoration of over 3,500 monuments and statues that were broken or damaged. Once that job wrapped up, the cemetery realized the importance of hiring a local, full-time conservator for ongoing work—and saw an ideal fit in Oakes.

“As the original assessment of work to be done came to a conclusion, the cemetery decided to keep William on staff as a cemetery conservator because we did not want to lose the skills and knowledge of the cemetery that he gained over the eight year period he worked under Robert Mosko,” said David Gilliam, Hollywood’s general manager. “Secondly, while the original monument restoration project has been completed, we realized there are and will be ongoing monument preservation and installation needs to address. We have included these tasks in William’s duties.”



*William Oakes – Hollywood Curator*

We recently caught up with Oakes to ask him about his new job and what he had planned for spring.

**Had you always planned to go into restoration?** Not really. With a history degree, there are no prescribed career paths; you have to find your own passions and follow them to create your own. I didn’t know cemetery conservation was an option until I saw the internship posted on a job site.

**What do you like about the job?** I am very fortunate

to have the opportunity to work at Hollywood Cemetery. It is humbling to work in a Nationally Registered Historic Place to help preserve the beautiful and unique monuments and statues that people have been visiting for nearly two centuries. I also love being able to work outside and work with my hands. Each stone or monument that I work on has its own set of challenges. I can find something different to do every single day.

**What was Mr. Mosko like as a mentor?** He was very knowledgeable and had done extensive research on both older and newer techniques. He taught us everything he knows. He started us off with smaller issues, then as we got more comfortable doing the smaller, easier things, he would build it up another layer until we were comfortable with that. Then we’d move on to the more challenging, expert-level things. I continue to research and learn new techniques to expand my capabilities. Last year I attended a training and certification class at Cathedral Stone Products, the premier masonry restoration product supplier in the country.

**What has been your most challenging project?** The biggest one was when we took the Nace monument apart and then put it back together after several years. It was nearly 100 pieces. I’ve also enjoyed working with Scott Taylor. I helped him reinstall a stained glass window for a restoration project in the Page mausoleum. I’m excited to start helping him with the Ginter windows [a new project involving the restoration of the three stained glass windows in the Lewis Ginter mausoleum].

**What are your favorite parts of the cemetery?** I like the area behind the Jefferson Davis circle; it’s enclosed with boxwoods and is very secluded, nice and quiet. I also like Presidents Circle as there is no better view of the city skyline from anywhere else.

**Is this the busiest time of year?** Spring and summer are pretty busy for me. I’ve had all winter to go and make notes on stones that were damaged and what they were going to need as far as restoration. I have a big list ready to go. I like for the weather to be above 40 degrees and less than 95 degrees, with no rain for about three days for me to do mortar work in the cemetery. I use specialized marble mortar, granite mortar and limestone mortar, and we’ve got to have those temperatures correct because it needs to be able to draw the water through the mortar and into the stone to have a solid connection.

# Remembering Hollywood through Planned Giving

*Hollywood Cemetery is important to my family and friends. Designating a portion of my IRA's final balance for Friends of Hollywood will help to ensure that the cemetery and arboretum remain a Richmond landmark in which all of us can take pride." -Timothy A. Kuhn, a plot owner from Chapel Hill, N.C.*

For many years, planned giving to Hollywood Cemetery has taken place informally and occasionally, with donors listing the historic resting place as a beneficiary in their wills. Now, Friends of Hollywood Cemetery is introducing a formal planned giving program to bring more attention to this important source of funding.

"The purpose of our new planned giving program is to increase our endowment. Currently, the endowment fund designated for Hollywood's future is insufficient to cover our expenses when Hollywood is no longer a working cemetery and does not have income from operations. Given the anticipated costs of maintaining the cemetery we need to significantly increase this important asset," said Edward M. Farley IV, Chair of Friends of Hollywood Cemetery.

An endowment is a special fund created through donations of money or other financial assets to a nonprofit such as Friends of Hollywood Cemetery, a 501(c)3 organization. The funds are invested to grow the principal, with the intent of one day producing self-sustaining income.

Most cemeteries set aside endowment funds. "Cemeteries always have to be mindful of the future, that a time will come when the cemetery will no longer have revenue from sales and will rely solely on investment income," said David Gilliam, Hollywood's General Manager.

As compared with other final resting places, Hollywood has significant needs, given the age and quality of its monuments, statues and mausoleums, and its status as a Level 1 Arboretum.

Friends of Hollywood has created a new brochure, *Your Perpetual Legacy for Hollywood*, to introduce readers to the new planned giving program. Information is now available on our website.


"On the Hollywood website we have very specific information about how to designate a legacy gift, different financial vehicles that can be utilized to make one, and

how your attorney should title our organization in your will. It's pretty straightforward," said Farley.

Since its establishment in 2007, Friends of Hollywood Cemetery has raised over \$3.57 million to fund such programs as monument and fence restoration, conservation of stained-glass windows, tree digitization, and the creation of the river overlooks.

"We've been very fortunate to have had so many generous donors that are passionate about Hollywood Cemetery, who have supported our ongoing restoration, preservation, and outreach efforts for many years," said Farley. "We are hopeful that there will be similar interest in building the endowment in order to continue to preserve Hollywood for many generations to come."

*For more information about planned giving, please contact Kelly Jones Wilbanks, Executive Director of Friends of Hollywood Cemetery, at [kwilbanks@hollywoodcemetery.org](mailto:kwilbanks@hollywoodcemetery.org), call our office at (804) 648-8501 or visit our website at [www.hollywoodcemetery.org](http://www.hollywoodcemetery.org).*



*Your  
Perpetual Legacy  
for Hollywood*

With the future in mind

FRIENDS OF  
HOLLYWOOD  
CEMETERY

## 2019 Contributors to Friends of Hollywood Cemetery

We are indeed grateful to the following donors for their generous support of Friends in 2019 through April 30, 2019. You have enabled us to raise awareness of Hollywood and to continue vital monument and fence restoration. Thank you for helping us to preserve Hollywood Cemetery for generations to come.

Edward M. Farley, IV  
Chair, Friends of Hollywood Cemetery

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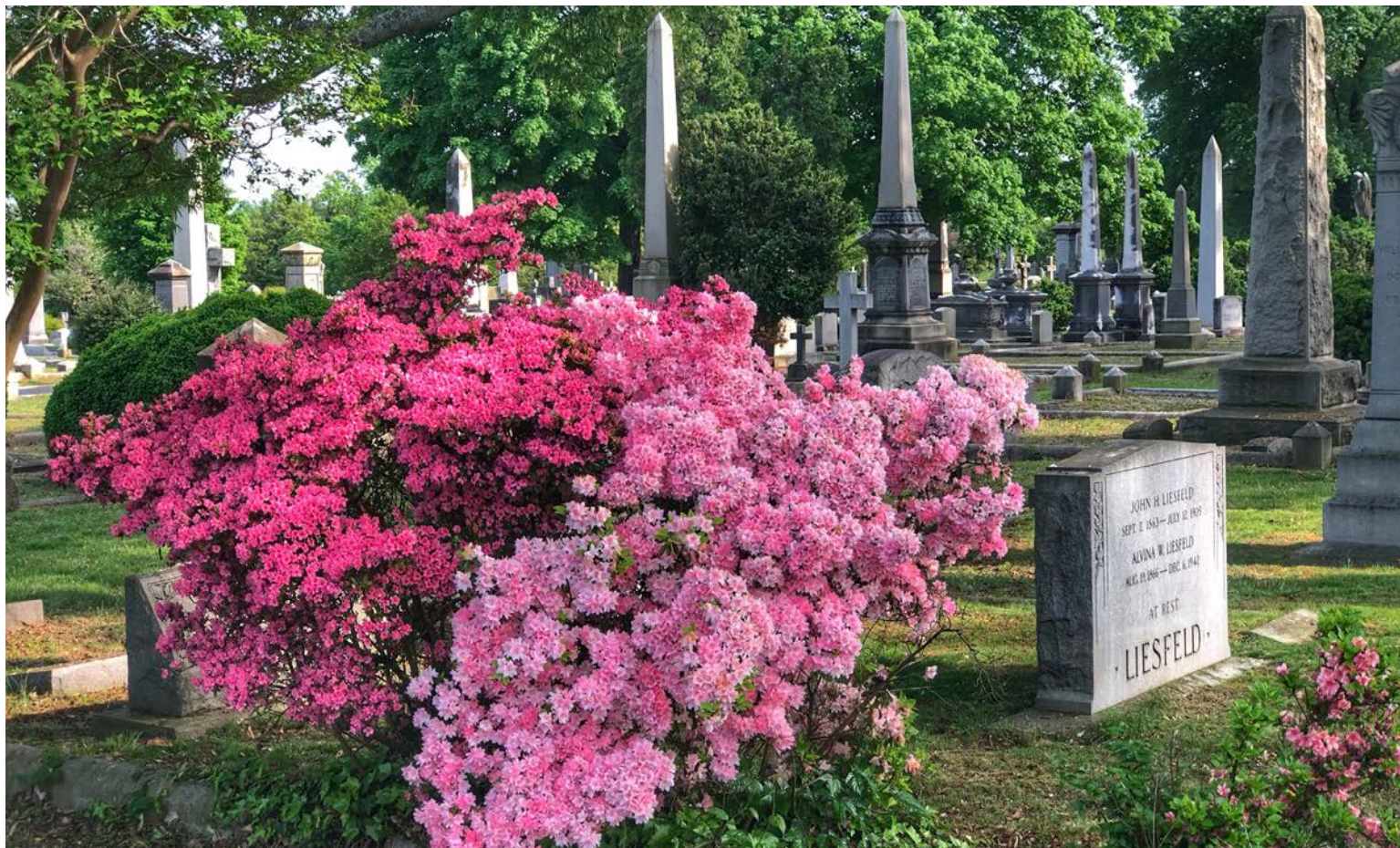
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