An Eighteen Month Project

Restoration of Monroe’s Beloved “Birdcage” Complete

For over a year and a half, scaffolding has protected President James Monroe’s final resting place in Hollywood Cemetery, as the ornate cast iron monument surrounding his sarcophagus underwent a meticulous historic restoration off-site. In March, the scaffolding was removed—revealing the monument’s extraordinary new look.

“If you’ve been to Hollywood Cemetery before and you’ve seen ‘the Birdcage,’ you are in for quite a surprise. We’re very pleased that we were able to restore it to its original color,” said Dena Potter, Director of Communications for the Department of General Services (DGS), which funded the restoration, which cost just over $1 million.

No Longer Painted Black

Once painted black to cover years of patching and repairs, the monument now boasts a color that Potter calls “natural buff”—determined to be the original color following a paint analysis. “The black was beautiful, but with it now restored to its original color you can see all those gorgeous details that were there but didn’t stand out before,” she said. “It’s absolutely stunning.”

The Department of General Services—which oversees the care of a dozen historic properties, including the Capitol, the Governor’s Mansion and the Lee Monument—began the restoration process in September 2015. The iron canopy was disassembled into 340 larger pieces (later broken down further) and removed from the cemetery.

A laser scan revealed about 40% of the pieces would need to be recast. “Some pieces had hairline fractures; others had deteriorated to a greater extent,” said Potter.

After a year and a half of extensive restoration, the “Birdcage” has been returned to Presidents Circle

(continued on page 2)
Monroe’s Beloved “Birdcage” (continued from page 1)

The historic rehabilitation was overseen by New York conservator Abigail Mack, with consultation by Andrew Baxter of Richmond. The conservators photographed and catalogued every piece as it was disassembled. All work for the project was completed in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

The Team

Mack and Baxter worked closely with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, as well as general contractor W.E. Bowman, Chase Architectural Metal, and the OK Foundry Company, all of Richmond. The project managers were Fred Garrett of Bowman and Scott Kim with DGS.

Located in Presidents Circle, the Gothic Revival monument was designed by noted architect Albert Lybrock and installed in 1859. The monument is a National Historic Landmark that is also listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register.

The monument is made of 618 cast iron pieces and 2,500 fasteners. All the fasteners needed to be replaced—one of the project’s unanticipated expenses that helped drive up the cost. The project was originally budgeted at $900,000. The sarcophagus was also cleaned and cared for in the restoration.

Canopy Reassembled Off-Site

“Before returning the canopy to the site, we actually reassembled most of it in the warehouse to make sure everything was going to fit back the way we hoped it would,” said Potter. Fortunately, the pieces fit perfectly—which she credits to “the thorough and careful job” of the conservators and contractors.

DGS completed the restoration in time for the bicentennial of President Monroe’s election as the fifth U.S. president on March 4, and for the annual wreath-laying ceremony that takes place on April 28th, Monroe’s birthday.

“I have been by to see the restored monument, and am very impressed,” said Peter Broadbent, a Richmond attorney who serves as vice-president of the James Monroe Memorial Foundation, which oversees the wreath-laying ceremony. “Since everyone in Richmond has been use to seeing the black color for more than a century, seeing the monument in what we are told is its original cream color is initially surprising, but that color blends in very well with the stone monuments around it.”

According to Hollywood’s General Manager David Gilliam, “The Monroe Tomb is one of the most visited sites in the cemetery. It was truly missed while it was being restored. Nonetheless, the result was worth the wait. I believe this was a detailed restoration of beautiful metal artwork of which the Commonwealth of Virginia can be proud.”

“I think a lot of people are really going to enjoy the change,” said Potter. “We put a lot of thought into how we were going to do this. For over a century, we’ve been patching it and filling it and caulking it and this was really our one shot to do it well and do it right, and do something that would last for future generations.”

Painted in its original natural color, exquisite cast iron designs are once again visible
March 18, 2017

Volunteers Take Part in 5th Annual Rose Pruning and Maintenance Day

With a 2017 Master Work Day Map spread out in front of her, Connie Hilker gave directions to the group of volunteers gathered in the Palmer Mausoleum.

“For the most part, it’s going to be take out everything that is dead and deadhead. That pretty much means if there’s a spent flower or a dead piece, cut it off. We do the roses here with a very light hand…We don’t want them to have to struggle to recover.”

Connie Hilker (center) poses with Rose Day Volunteers standing ready for a morning of pruning and maintenance

For five years, Hilker—the owner of Hartwood Roses in Fredericksburg—has directed volunteers during the cemetery’s annual pruning and maintenance day. This spring, in anticipation of the work day, she spent three days evaluating all the roses in the cemetery. She arrived with a carefully organized plan in place for the 25 volunteers who showed up to work, toting canvas bags filled with garden tools and gloves. She handed them red notebooks filled with instructions and pointed out their designated areas on the map.

The groups were assigned a total of 95 rose bushes. This year, in addition to pruning, the volunteers were charged with placing a ring of cobblestones around the bases of the roses. “It’s a visual clue for the guys with the weed whackers,” she said.

As the group huddled around the map, laid out on a long table, Hilker gave specific pruning directions to each group. For Knock Out Roses, she said, “I want them this high,” she said, pointing to her knee. “18 to 20 inches.”

She discussed a problem area with another group. “This one’s been eaten to pieces by deer,” she said.

In addition to deer issues, regular volunteer and Richmond Rose Society member Lynn Pappas worried about the unusual weather. “I think with the early spring, everything started to come out and then was frozen,” she said.

More experienced newcomers included Jane Hartough, who helps run plant clinics and other activities in her role as a master gardener with Henrico County, and Willie Mills of Ashland, a member and past president of the Richmond Rose Society.

Many of the volunteers enjoy returning year after year to the same roses. Dean Siwiec of Moseley, has tended to “the Jeff Davis Tea” for four years. He laughed about the first year, when he was barely visible under the then-monstrous bush, which spilled out into the road. As he removed one long limb, he took a tumble. “I hit it hard,” he said.

Five years of maintenance has meant a shorter work day. The group completed their task around 12 noon, and enjoyed Sally Bell box lunches provided by Friends of Hollywood Cemetery.

Summing up the day, Hilker said, “It makes me very happy to have so many people who volunteer to help care for Hollywood’s roses.”

Hollywood Rose Day Volunteers
March 18, 2017

| Tracy Anderson | Lori Gongaware | Bob Olsen |
| Melissa Beasley | Jane Hartough | Sharon Pajka |
| Sarah Beasley | Travis Hebert | Lynn Pappas |
| Joe Brancoli | Alesa Hemenway | Dean Siwiec |
| Joie Carter | Connie Hilker | Caroline Tisdale |
| Ed Carpenter | Wendy Kleinfield | Lela Tisdale |
| Pat Cash | Grace LeRose | Marty Vaughan |
| Lynn Davis | Suzy Miladin | }

Suzy Miladin

Grace LeRose

Marty Vaughan

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The Obelisk and Hollywood Cemetery

In older parts of Hollywood, whether along the bluffs overlooking the rapids of the James or in sections farther from the river, the most arresting design among the varied monuments that strikes the eye is the obelisk, elegant in its simplicity, towering over the rolling hills. There are whole forests of them. How did that come to be? Most people probably suspect the Egyptian influence. But they likely do not know why this particular design came to enjoy such a prominent presence in Hollywood. The cemetery, after all, was built more than four millennia after the pharaohs commanded armies of slaves to quarry these granite monoliths and drag them by brute force over huge distances and set them upright, usually in pairs outside temples, with the aid of only the simplest tools.

The explanation, as so often in history, follows a very crooked path, in this case from the Old Kingdom when Egyptians first carved obelisks to the Victorian America of Hollywood’s birth. The span of time itself staggers the mind: Cleopatra, the last pharaoh, is closer in time to us than to Pharaoh Khufu, for whom the great pyramid at Giza was built. With its mysterious, awe-inspiring temples, pyramids, and obelisks, Egypt was ancient when the Romans conquered it. By then it was a civilization in irretrievable decay, but it exerted such a sway in the Mediterranean world that the conquerors were soon filching obelisks to display back in Rome. Augustus moved the first one to the imperial capital in 10 B.C., and eventually Rome sported more of them than Egypt.

Over time all but one of these reused monuments toppled over, but Renaissance popes salvaged a number of them and revived the fascination with obelisks. The best known today is the obelisk of Caligula. It was the only one that an emperor moved from Egypt and that never collapsed. Pope Sixtus V had it relocated to the center of Saint Peter’s Square when the new basilica was under construction in the late sixteenth century.

The eighteenth century witnessed a sporadic flurry of new obelisks, notably in England, Ireland, and Russia. But it was Napoleon’s invasion of Egypt in 1798 that set the stage for the greatest revival of interest in all things Egyptian. Although defeat by the British at the battle of the Nile forced the French to withdraw, the scientific expedition that accompanied Napoleon’s troops published twenty large volumes filled with thousands of images. Over the next decades these books ignited an obsession with ancient Egypt in Europe and America.

The first modern appropriation of a large Egyptian obelisk came in 1836. In that year France erected on the Place de la Concorde in the center of Paris a monolith of Pharaoh Ramses II taken from the temple at Luxor. In addition, for the first time whole buildings arose in the Egyptian style. The first in America was the Congregation Mikveh Israel Synagogue in Philadelphia (1824) followed by others in...
New Orleans and New York. Richmond’s Egyptian Building housing what became the Medical College of Virginia appeared in 1845, three years before groundbreaking on the largest obelisk anywhere, the Washington Monument. (Technically, the monument is a building, not an obelisk, which strictly speaking is a single, monolithic stone.)

The association of ancient Egypt with death and the afterlife, combined with the Egyptian Revival in architecture, almost guaranteed that elements of mausoleums and gravestones in Hollywood would reflect that style when the cemetery was founded in 1847. Not surprisingly, the first monument other than a headstone was a small obelisk that Charles Purcell erected in 1851 at the grave of his young son. Soon they were everywhere. Before a decade had passed, fifty-six obelisks of varying sizes dotted the hills of Hollywood.

The design clearly appealed to Richmonders but was not universally popular. Thomas Harding Ellis, boyhood friend of Poe and president of the James River and Kanawha Canal Company, was the dominant figure in Hollywood’s early years, serving as president of the cemetery company for more than two decades. Ellis soon had his fill of obelisks. In 1853 he confessed his loathing for the design and prayed that “everybody won’t put up an obelisk.” Vain hope.

The Civil War only temporarily slowed the erection of monuments, and shortly after the conflict ended more obelisks than ever sprouted on the hillsides of Hollywood. Although the Egyptian Revival in architecture had begun to fade before the war, the obelisk retained its hold on lot owners seeking to memorialize their loved ones. One notable obelisk of the period was that raised over the grave of Civil War surgeon and luminary of postwar Richmond medicine Hunter Holmes McGuire. Another marked the grave of former Confederate general and governor Fitzhugh Lee.

Obelisk enthusiasm persisted in the late nineteenth century with removal of a pair of monoliths originally erected by Pharaoh Thutmose III, both nicknamed Cleopatra’s Needle, to the Thames Embankment in London (1878) and Central Park in New York City (1881). And then great acclaim greeted dedication of the Washington Monument in 1885.

Discovery of the gilded tomb of Tutankhamen in 1922 kindled renewed Egypt mania, mostly manifested in decorative arts. In the twentieth century, aside from the many found in cemeteries, obelisks were constructed around the world, from New Delhi to Buenos Aires to Israel.

In Hollywood the typical modern marker is a low granite stone no more than several feet in height. As a result, the towering granite sentinels of obelisks erected in earlier times still dominate the view. Even in the twenty-first century, if not as prolific as before, new obelisks have taken their place in the cemetery. The newest ones can be seen in a redeveloped lane in the Chapel Hill section, one of the oldest in Hollywood, and in the Idlewood section, one of the newest. Today the monoliths inspired by ancient obelisks first quarried by the pharaohs along the Nile still stand guard as they have done for nearly two centuries over the graves of Virginians buried in Hollywood Cemetery.

Nelson D. Lankford, Ph.D.
Board of Directors, Hollywood Cemetery


One of the many outstanding social problems in post-Civil War Virginia was a lack of educational opportunities, particularly for young women. Although there were a few private schools for upper class white girls, Southern tradition held that girls were much too fragile to handle the tough educational subjects required of boys. There certainly was no thought of preparing them for college.

Although “genteel poor” after the war, the Ellett family retained a circle of acquaintances that included Robert E. Lee. In fact, he attended Jennie’s 7th birthday party and gave her a kiss. Lee became her hero, and she endorsed his idea of duty as a way of life. After all, duty called him to help Virginia heal from the ravages of war. So she would do the same.

Her mother, who had been well educated in the North, was determined that Jennie and Louise get the best possible education. She even took an active teaching role when Miss Jennie established her own school. The sisters were first taught by their mother and then attended private girl’s schools in Richmond. Unlike many other girls of her time period, Jennie insisted she wanted to be “learned” and early on knew she wanted to be a teacher.

In 1897 Miss Jennie and her mother moved their school to 112 E. Franklin, a block away on Linden Row. Miss Jennie particularly loved England, English history, the Classics and Greek Mythology. She disliked “silly primers” for her youngest students and instead exposed them to English literature and the classics. History plays were performed on a regular basis and provocative debates were held on a variety of subjects. Geography was taught by map reading exercises. Foreign language was a requirement for Miss Jennie’s students but she wasn’t that interested in math or science until accreditation made it necessary.

During the summers starting in 1895, Miss Jennie traveled to Harvard and other northern colleges to advance her education, usually in English literature. About this time she started thinking about having her school become a college prep school for young ladies. This was another revolutionary idea. After all, a woman was expected to marry and only very unattractive women would go to college. She fine-tuned her curriculum so that her school was recognized by Bryn Mawr College as one whose students were qualified to do college work. Because of her efforts, in 1904 Richmond became one of eight cities in the country to administer the difficult Bryn Mawr entrance exams. Her school was the first in

The portrait of Miss Jennie by Prince Pierre Troubetzkoy was commissioned by the St. Catherine’s Alumnae Association in 1922

Against that background, the progressive educational standards of Virginia Randolph Ellett (always known as “Miss Jennie”) are extraordinary. Her New York mother met her father James during a visit to Richmond. Her father later accepted a position in a New York firm and Jennie was born there on January 30, 1857. But the family moved back to Richmond when she was very young. Her father died during the Civil War at the Battle of Fredericksburg.

As a young girl, she lived with her family in her grandparents’ home on Church Hill, located on Grace between 22nd and 23rd Streets. Only a small garden separated their house from their next door neighbor, Elizabeth Van Lew, a suspected Union spy. She and her sister Louise were afraid of her and would hiss “witch, witch” whenever they saw her.

The picture of Miss Jennie by Prince Pierre Troubetzkoy was commissioned by the St. Catherine’s Alumnae Association in 1922

Visit Miss Jennie’s grave site as well as those of a number of other post-bellum women who made major contributions in the fields of public and higher education, women’s rights, literature, health care and historic preservation. For more information visit Valentine Museum 2 PM - 4 PM
Richmond to send girls to college.

One of her most important New Englander contacts was Professor John Macy. He became her tutor at Harvard and a good friend. For 30 years, Miss Jennie sent him her students’ theme papers for grading and suggestions. In this way, she developed a university mentoring program for her students. In 1913, he introduced Miss Jennie to the teachings of Maria Montessori and by the following year, she had established the first Montessori school in Richmond.

By this time her school had moved to another location at 14 N. Laurel, across from Monroe Park. Physical education had always been an important part of Miss Jennie’s curriculum. So the park became the setting for a number of athletic activities; however, basketball required more space so she rented a lot at what is now the site of Altria Theater. The Monroe Park setting did present a few potential problems since the McGuire School for Boys was across the park. The fountain was supposed to separate the two schools and no fraternizing or flirting was allowed at recess. History doesn’t record how well that worked out!!

In 1917, Miss Jennie opened a country day school at its present location on Grove Avenue and incorporated it under the name of the Virginia Randolph School. Three years later, it was taken over by the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia in 1920 and renamed for St. Catherine, patron saint of young women, especially those getting an education. Although no longer headmistress, she continued to teach and live at the school for the rest of her life. In 1925 Miss Jennie spent a year at Oxford furthering her education. While there she was a guest of former student Lady Nancy Astor, the first female to sit in the House of Commons.

She never got a college degree but in 1934 she received an honorary Phi Beta Kappa key from the Epsilon Chapter of the University of Richmond. By the end of her life, Miss Jennie was recognized both in New England and Virginia as one of the leading educators of the times. Her influence is still being felt today as St. Catherine’s teachers continue her innovative and progressive approach to education.

Miss Jennie’s grave marker in Section L, Lot 38, Hollywood Cemetery

Miss Jennie died on April 9, 1939 and is buried in Hollywood Cemetery. Her epitaph, written by former student James Branch Cabell, reads:

‘Foremost in learning and in faith and aid,
Preeminent, all tireless, never fond
But resolute in progress: and afraid
Only of finding no more work beyond’

LeAnn Hensche, Valentine Museum

Please join LeAnn Hensche for
The Women of Hollywood Walking Tour
May 13th and September 9th
2 PM - 4 PM

Visit Miss Jennie’s grave site as well as those of a number of other post-bellum women who made major contributions in the fields of public and higher education, women’s rights, literature, health care and historic preservation. For more information visit www.thevalentine.org/hollywood-cemetery-women-of-hollywood
A Virginia Colony Settler

Thomas Claybourne (1647 – 1683) Rests at Hollywood

When Hollywood Cemetery comes to mind, many recall that it is the final resting place for eighteen thousand Confederate dead from the battlefields and hospitals of the Civil War. And they would of course be correct. A little known fact is that in addition to these, many others from prior conflicts have found their way to Hollywood, re-interred there from earlier burial sites. For example, there have been numerous re-interments of individuals who bore arms in the War of 1812 and the American Revolution. And for each, there is a story.

But, perhaps, the oldest story of a re-interred individual in the Cemetery is that of Lt. Colonel Thomas Claybourne. His story dates to 17th century Virginia. Claybourne was the son of William Claybourne who arrived from England in Jamestown in 1621 and went on to become one of the Virginia Colony’s most highly regarded figures. His home was located at “Romancoke”, a 5,000 acre estate on the north bank of the Pamunkey River in what was then New Kent County, Virginia (today’s King William County).

Son Thomas was born at Romancoke on August 17, 1647. He was “a gentlemen of the soil,” served in the Virginia Militia as a Lt. Colonel, and was Secretary of New Kent County. Thomas also engaged in mercantile activities with his brother, William, shipping tobacco and other goods to Jamaica. In 1673/74, a portion of Romancoke was granted to Thomas by his father and later named “Sweet Hall.” On October 7, 1683 at age thirty-six, he was killed by an Indian arrow.

History records that 17th century Virginia was a period of continuous conflict between native Indians (the Powhatan Federation) seeking to protect their tidewater tribal lands from an ever increasing number of Anglo-European settlers. The most belligerent tribes of the federation were the Paminkeys and Mattaponies whose hunting and fishing lands and villages were part of and nearby to emerging white settlements, farms, and estates.

Although the Virginia Indian Wars were officially at an end in the late 1600s, skirmishes and incidents between Indians and settlers such as that leading to the death of Thomas Claybourne were not uncommon.

Claybourne was buried in a Romancoke farm field under a flat, rectangular stone, now confirmed to be English sandstone. The most logical explanation why English sandstone would appear in 17th century Virginia is that it arrived as ballast in ships traveling the Atlantic, sailing from ports in England to the Virginia Colony.

Dr. Herbert A. Claiborne, Jr., a direct descendent of Thomas Claybourne, recalls how the stone – out of sight and mind for many years – came to his family’s attention. “A local boatman at Custis Pond (situated on Romancoke land) mentioned to my father on one his fishing visits there that he (the boatman) was aware of a burial monument, presumably my father’s family, and its exact location on the old Romancoke property.” The boatman’s information proved correct.

Dr. Claiborne’s father made the decision to move the stone and what could be retrieved of Thomas Claybourne’s remains to the Claiborne family’s plot at Hollywood Cemetery where it appears today.

Over the centuries, nature has rendered the stone’s inscription nearly illegible. Earlier examinations, supported by a grave rubbing, have yielded the following:

Here lyeth interred ye body of Lt. Collonel Thomas Claybourne
Son of Coll. Wm. Claybourne
He departed this lyfe ye 7th day of October Anno Domi 1683
Aesatis Sueae 36
1 Mo & 21 D

(continued on page 9)
The inscription does not state Thomas Claybourne’s date of birth in a way that one would normally expect to see it. One must perform a few mathematical steps to discover it. “Aesatis Suae,” a Latin phrase, means “in the year of life.” Subtracting thirty-six (Claybourne’s age at death) from his year of death (1683) informs us of his birth year – 1647. Treating “1 Mo” as a month of thirty days, “1 Mo & 21 D” amounts to fifty-one (51) days.

Counting backwards fifty-one (51) days from October 7, we would arrive at Claybourne’s birth date – August 17, 1647.

During Thomas Claybourne’s short life, Virginia was the largest and fastest growing of the original colonies with an Anglo-European population of approximately 10,000 in 1620, increasing fourfold to 40,000 in 1680.

Most 17th century records reveal the name “Claybourne.” The ledger inscription (opposite) records Thomas’ last name with a different spelling – “Clayboune.” Today’s spelling—“Claiborne”—has been used since the 18th century.

**Congratulations to our 2016 Distinguished Cemeterian, David Gilliam, Hollywood Cemetery—Richmond**

At the 2016 Virginia Cemetery Association (VCA) Annual Meeting, David Gilliam received the prestigious “Distinguished Cemeterian” Award. This award is bestowed by past presidents to a member whose lifetime volunteer contributions to the VCA and cemetery industry are deemed worthy of special recognition. David is only the twelfth recipient in the VCA’s 68-year history.

David began his career in the cemetery industry as Assistant Manager of Hollywood Cemetery in 1985, and has served as its General Manager from 1988 to date. David assisted in the development and implementation of a Strategic Plan for Hollywood Cemetery from 1995 to date and in the founding of “Friends of Hollywood Cemetery”, a nonprofit charitable organization to support the cemetery.

David has served the VCA since his election to the Board of Directors in 1993. While VCA President (1996-98), a 30-page bill was filed in the General Assembly attacking cemeteries (seeking to “level the playing field” with funeral directors). He skillfully defended the cemetery industry and guided the legislative process to a successful conclusion.

In 2008, the Governor appointed David to the state Cemetery Board; he has served as its Chairman since 2012. David was appointed by the City of Richmond Mayor to the Richmond Historic Cemetery Commission in 2000, and authored the Commission’s recommendations to the city that were presented in March 2001.

We congratulate David on his tireless, valuable service and wish him all the best in mountains not yet climbed.
2017 Contributors to
Friends of Hollywood Cemetery

We are indeed grateful to the following donors for their generous support of Friends in 2017 through April 6, 2017. 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

The 1847 Society

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The 1847 Society
Leaders for preservation of Hollywood Cemetery

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Ivy Circle for Gifts of $1,000 to $2,499

We invite you to join the 1847 Society and continue the ongoing restoration and preservation of Hollywood Cemetery.
Monroe’s Beloved “Birdcage” (continued from page 1)

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DGS completed the restoration in time for the bicentennial of President Monroe’s election as the fifth U.S. president on March 4, and for the annual wreath-laying ceremony that takes place on April 28th, Monroe’s birthday.

“I have been by to see the restored monument, and am very impressed," said Peter Broadbent, a Richmond attorney who serves as vice-president of the James Monroe Memorial Foundation, which oversees the wreath-laying ceremony.

"Since everyone in Richmond has been use to seeing the black color for more than a century, seeing the monument in what we are told is its original cream color is initially surprising, but that color blends in very well with the stone monuments around it."

According to Hollywood’s General Manager David Gilliam, "The Monroe Tomb is one of the most visited sites in the cemetery. It was truly missed while it was being restored. Nonetheless, the result was worth the wait. I believe this was a detailed restoration of beautiful metal artwork of which the Commonwealth of Virginia can be proud."

“I think a lot of people are really going to enjoy the change," said Potter. "We put a lot of thought into how we were going to do this. For over a century, we’ve been patching it and filling it and caulking it and this was really our one shot to do it well and do it right, and do something that would last for future generations."
For over a year and a half, scaffolding has protected President James Monroe's final resting place in Hollywood Cemetery, as the ornate cast iron monument surrounding his sarcophagus underwent a meticulous historic restoration off-site. In March, the scaffolding was removed—revealing the monument's extraordinary new look.

"If you've been to Hollywood Cemetery before and you've seen 'the Birdcage,' you are in for quite a surprise. We're very pleased that we were able to restore it to its original color," said Dena Potter, Director of Communications for the Department of General Services (DGS), which funded the restoration, which cost just over $1 million.

No Longer Painted Black

Once painted black to cover years of patching and repairs, the monument now boasts a color that Potter calls "natural buff"—determined to be the original color following a paint analysis. "The black was beautiful, but with it now restored to its original color you can see all those gorgeous details that were there but didn't stand out before," she said. "It's absolutely stunning."

The Department of General Services—which oversees the care of a dozen historic properties, including the Capitol, the Governor's Mansion and the Lee Monument—began the restoration process in September 2015. The iron canopy was disassembled into 340 larger pieces (later broken down further) and removed from the cemetery.

A laser scan revealed about 40% of the pieces would need to be recast. "Some pieces had hairline fractures; others had deteriorated to a greater extent," said Potter.

(continued on page 2)

An Eighteen Month Project

Restoration of Monroe's Beloved "Birdcage" Complete

Hollywood Cemetery is pleased to welcome the Heritage Rose Foundation on Saturday, May 20th. Devoted to the preservation of old roses, this group draws both U.S. and international visitors each year to the conference. For cost and other details, visit HeritageRoseFoundation.org.