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THE SECRET IS OUT! CHARLESTON'S SECRET BIRD SANCTUARY REVEALED **First Book Signing is Saturday, Dec. 3, at Magnolia Cemetery**

The new coffee table book by College of Charleston communication professor Patrick Harwood highlights a little known dimension to Charleston's historic Magnolia Cemetery: it's a bird paradise.

"The Birds of Magnolia Cemetery: Charleston's Secret Bird Sanctuary" documents, in more than 400 photographs, nearly 50 types of birds spotted in the intimate, unusual setting of one of America's most historic and beautiful graveyards.

On Saturday, Dec. 3 from noon to 3 p.m. Harwood will hold his first book signing at the cemetery itself. "I don't know if there's ever been a book signing at a cemetery before but I can't think of a better location for mine," Harwood said. "Magnolia Cemetery is such a lovely and interesting place. Those who haven't been there before are in for a treat."

Magnolia Cemetery, founded in 1850 and the final resting place of 35,000 souls, including thousands of Civil War soldiers and sailors and many distinguished Charlestonians, is located at 70 Cunnington Ave., which is off Meeting Street just down from Morrison Drive and Santi's Mexican restaurant.

Published by BirdsEyeViews and printed locally by Knight Printing and Graphics, the 130-page pictorial book sells for \$29.95 (two for \$55). Only checks and cash will be accepted.

Harwood, an adjunct communication professor at the College of Charleston and former WCSC-TV news reporter, began capturing bird images at the cemetery in 2008. He said the idea of creating a book came about a year ago when he spent time counting how many different types of birds he had photographed and was impressed that he had more than 40.

The book is endorsed by longtime cemetery superintendent Beverly Donald. "I will enjoy for years to come some of my most cherished memories made at Magnolia through the efforts of this project," she wrote for the book's back cover. "I applaud him and feel this book would be a wonderful addition to everyone's collection."

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The Birds of Magnolia Cemetery (p. 2)

“Patrick Harwood has accomplished the impossible: He has brought a graveyard to life, and he has done so beautifully by honoring those who lie there through the beauty and grace of birds,” writes former College of Charleston president Alex Sanders, a noted environmentalist.

Harwood said what started as a diversion turned into a passion that has culminated in his first book endeavor. “Who would think that a place of death could contain so much life,” he said.

He said his first visit to the cemetery in March 2008 when he encountered a pair of wood storks got him interested in birding. “I used to chase birdies with my putter, now I chase them with my camera.”

The cemetery’s remote location, two lagoons, adjacent salt marshes and lack of (living) human presence have created an ecosystem that attracts a wide array of birds from large herons, egrets, wood storks and osprey to smaller birds and ducks such as belted kingfishers, yellow-rumped warblers, mallards and hooded mergansers.

“Even though I have quietly meandered through Magnolia Cemetery on many occasions, I never realized the plethora of birds that visit and make their homes among the ponds, statues and tombstones,” writes Greg Schmitt, a College of Charleston communication professor and professional photographer. “Clearly this book is a labor of love for Patrick, and I am certain you- as am I- will be ever-enriched with these beautiful images he has given us.”

“Patrick’s photography, identifications, passionate observations, and field notes open our eyes to the beauty and diversity of birds found at this Lowcountry destination, all the while encouraging us to see the cemetery from an entirely different perspective,” writes Beaufort-based Marvin Bouknight, author of “South Carolina’s Lowcountry...Naturally.”

Harwood has worked at the College of Charleston since 1991, in public relations then as a professor in the communication department. A former broadcast journalist, Harwood holds degrees from Virginia Commonwealth University and Northwestern University.

For more information or to purchase the book, please contact Patrick Harwood at 843.224.3112, magnoliacemeterybirds@hotmail.com or through his photography website at <http://www.mybirdseyeviews.blogspot.com/>.

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